Cracking the Code

Why Western Australia abandoned rugby for Australian rules football in 1885

Honours Thesis

Bachelor of Arts in History with Honours

Sean Douglas Cowan

Presented 30 October 2015
DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains, as its main content, work that has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary educational institution, including Murdoch.

Signed:

Full Name: Sean Douglas Cowan

Student Number: 32401015

Date: 27 October 2015
COPYRIGHT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that a copy of this thesis will be held at the Murdoch University Library.

I understand that, under the provisions of s51.2 of the Copyright Act 1968, all or part of this thesis may be copied without infringement of copyright where such a reproduction is for the purposes of study and research.

This statement does not signal any transfer of copyright away from the author.

Signed:
.................................................................................................................................

Full Name of Degree: Bachelor of Arts in History with Honours

Thesis Title: Cracking the Code: Why Western Australian abandoned rugby for Australian rules football in 1885

Author: Sean Douglas Cowan

Year: 2015
This study of the early years of football in Western Australia investigates the reasons for the abandonment of the Rugby Union rules and the adoption of the new Victorian rules in 1885. Through an examination of the newspapers of the day – which are the only known primary material concerning those events – it will be established that the people of Western Australia were not wedded to a particular code before the 1880s. This changed in 1882 when the first clubs were formed and the Rugby Union rules were adopted.

Advocates for the Victorian rules were immediately active, claiming the British game was on its way out elsewhere because it was too violent and not entertaining to watch. As a result, playing that code would rule W.A. out of intercolonial competition in the future, they argued. The ad hoc nature of the matches played in Perth did little to convince people that football was moving in the right direction under the Rugby Union rules, while the footballers who enjoyed playing under them were also able to embrace the Victorian rules because the two codes were not as dissimilar in 1885 as they are today.

While historians have previously named Bill Bateman, Harry Herbert and Hugh Dixson as being responsible for forcing the adoption of the new rules, the situation was actually much more complex. Each club voted separately on whether to play under the Victorian or Rugby Union rules in 1885 and there were lobbyists for the new code at each club. Herbert’s importance to the decision taken by the Fremantle Football Club has been over-stated by previous historians, while Charles Bishop has never been recognised for his efforts at the Perth Rovers Football Club.

Migration from the eastern colonies and social class were also factors in the change. Before 1885, the homogeneity and insularity of the groups of footballers at each club had weighed against the adoption of the Victorian rules. At the crucial juncture in 1885, however, a group of South Australians, led by Dixson and supported by working class West Australians, formed a new football club. This tipped the balance in favour of the new code.
ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustration 1 (Title Page): Unknown Photographer, Fremantle Football Club, 1885, West Australian Newspapers Library.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank Professor Michael Sturma for his excellent advice during the course of the past two years and his always-timely feedback about this thesis. I would also like to thank my academic colleagues at Curtin University who have allowed me to bounce ideas off them over the course of the past six months.

It is certainly appropriate that I also acknowledge those who have provided advice and guidance during the research phase for this thesis, chief among them being W.A. Football Commission historian Greg Wardell-Johnson and historians Steve Errington and Norman Ashton. The staff at the State Records Office are also due my thanks, especially Tim, whose help with the genealogical research required for the prosopographical examination was invaluable.

Special thanks are due to my partner Linda for her support, especially at a time when she was undertaking her own course of study for the first time in many years.

Finally, I think it appropriate to thank the footballers who made the decision to adopt the Victorian rules in 1885, without whom I would be forced to spend my weekends watching men throw the ball backwards and run headlong into tackles. Thank you for embracing the game of Australian football and thank you for inspiring me to continue with my research when it would have been much easier to turn on the television and watch a game.
INTRODUCTION

In the winter of 1885, the footballers of Western Australia abandoned the Rugby Union rules, under which all competitive matches had been played since the first clubs were formed in 1882. In their place, the Victorian rules were adopted and an association formed, making Western Australia the last colony in the country to have an organised competition for Australian football.¹ This much of West Australian football history is known and uncontested, thanks largely to the fact that the newspapers of the day covered all codes of football from the first known game, which was likely played under some form of rugby-style rules in 1868.² What are debatable, however, are the reasons for the abandonment of the British code in favour of a new set of rules devised in Victoria by men who had little connection to the outpost once known as the Swan River Colony. This thesis will focus on the reasons for that change in 1885.

A BRIEF HISTORIOGRAPHY OF SPORT

The history of both sports and sporting clubs have been written about for almost as long as the sports and clubs have been around. Early histories were basically antiquarian accounts, sometimes written from memory, which concentrated on the deeds of sportsmen and administrators, usually for a popular audience. It was not until the rise of social history from the 1950s that academic historians turned their minds to the value of sport as a prism through which society could be viewed. British historian Peter McIntosh is generally credited with being the first academic to paint sport as a tool of social control in his 1952 history of physical education in England from 1800.³ His 1963 book, Sport in Society, presented a social analysis of sport throughout history and became a physical education studies text book for school students in the United Kingdom.⁴ Historians were generally slow to latch on to McIntosh’s idea and only a handful of scholars embraced the topic before social

³ Peter McIntosh, Physical Education in England since 1800, London: G. Bell (1952).
history exploded in the 1970s, along with the championing of ‘total history’ by the French journal *Annales*.

Australia followed the trend, largely mirroring the experiences of both Britain and the United States. Daryl Adair credits Bill Mandle with being the “giant” who brought sports history into mainstream Australian history as part of his work on nationalism and identity. A small group of Australian sports historians then launched themselves into the field, including Brian Stoddart, whose analysis of sport in Western Australia will be discussed below. Others included Wray Vamplew, John Daly, John O’Hara, Richard Cashman, Bob Stewart, Bill Murray, and Colin Tatz. Adair categorised their work, and those of subsequent Australian sports historians, into three main areas: national self-image through sport, norms of sport participation, and the involvement (or otherwise) in sport of so-called minority groups. Similar themes have been common in the sporting histories of other countries. For instance, Martin Johnes identified class, economics and identities of place as being key themes in the historiography of British sport, though he argued that discussions of gender and race had not been as prevalent in sporting histories as they had in other areas of British history.

Adair’s first key theme, national self-image through sport, was pioneered by Mandle in his 1973 journal article “Cricket and Australian Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century”. Using contemporary newspaper reports, Mandle traced the development of Australian attitudes through cricket from the 1860s, arguing an initial deference towards the English transformed by the 1890s into feelings of confidence. This confidence, achieved by teams that relied on colonial co-operation, provided a fillip for the case for federation. Subsequent historians have built upon Mandle’s case, examining the dual loyalty exhibited by those who lived in this country as both

---

5 Daryl Adair, “Australian Sport History: From the Founding Years to Today”, in *Sport in History*, Volume 29, Number 3 (September 2009), p. 406.
6 Adair, “Australian Sport History: From the Founding Years to Today”, p. 406.
Britons and Australians.\textsuperscript{9} Others, such as Ed Jaggard, have examined issues of national identity through both sport and war, while the way in which Australians have dealt with both climate and space, often using the beach as subject matter, have also been prevalent, most notably in the work of Douglas Booth.\textsuperscript{10}

The second broad theme Adair identifies includes issues of class and privilege, professionalism, the media, sport in education and gender identities. Among the historians working in this area is Stoddart, whose claim that the “myth of sport being open and accessible to all, irrespective of social and economic station, arose early in the evolution of Australian society” is amply supported by his peers.\textsuperscript{11} Many argue that the myth continues to this day.\textsuperscript{12} The greatest contribution to include women in the history of Australian football has probably been made by Rob Hess, whose examinations of the importance of women to the game have been extensive.\textsuperscript{13} University of Western Australia research fellow Debbie Hindley followed in Hess’s footsteps, embracing interdisciplinary methods to argue that women have been volunteers, spectators, professionals, partners, mothers and players throughout the game’s history, but were marginalised by football authorities. Her analysis is unusual in that it includes evidence and discussion about football in Western Australia, whereas others have largely concentrated on the Victorian experience.\textsuperscript{14}

Adair’s final theme, arguably the most fertile for recent academics, involves issues of race. Several historians have considered the way in which Aboriginal people were either excluded from sport or were only conditionally included. Bernard Whimpress,
for example, argues Aboriginal cricketers were effectively prevented from reaching
the pinnacle of the game during the nineteenth century by various discriminatory
laws and officials.\textsuperscript{15} Tatz examined the involvement of Aboriginal people in
professional sports, arguing amateur sport was the province of the white middle
classes who could afford it, while black men saw sport as a way of escaping from
poverty.\textsuperscript{16} Examinations of race in sport have not been confined to the Indigenous
population; Ciannon Cazaly, in her PhD thesis, considered the way in which migrants
had been treated in Australian football, arguing administrators should learn from
those experiences when developing programs to draw new Australians to the
game.\textsuperscript{17} Australian soccer has also proved fertile ground for historians, many of
whom argue it was for many years marginalised because it was not considered
“Australian”. James Skinner, Dwight Zakus and Allan Edwards argue that subsequent
moves by authorities to de-ethnicise the clubs have been aimed at bringing the
game into the mainstream.\textsuperscript{18}

WEST AUSTRALIAN SPORTS HISTORIOGRAPHY

The tradition of historical scholarship in West Australian sport does not run as deep
as in other parts of the country, leading Jaggard to note that the state’s sporting
historiography is somewhat homogenous and consists largely of chronological
narratives.\textsuperscript{19} Jaggard groups these narratives into three categories – those written
by people interested in particular sports or clubs, those written by journalists, and
those written by academic historians.\textsuperscript{20} Examples of those written by club
supporters include former footballer Dolph Heinrichs’ 1947\textit{ Jubilee Book of the East
Fremantle Football Club}, which chronicles the story of Old Easts from its formation

\textsuperscript{15} Bernard Whimpress,\textit{ Passport to Nowhere: Aborigines in Australian Cricket 1850-1939}, Sydney:
\textsuperscript{16} See Colin Tatz, “Aborigines in sport”, Bedford Park, South Australia: The Australian Society for
\textsuperscript{17} Ciannon Cazaly, \textit{Playing the Game: The Experiences of Migrant-Background Players in Australian
\textsuperscript{18} James Skinner, Dwight Zakus and Allan Edwards, “Coming in from the Margins: Ethnicity,
Community Support and the Rebranding of Soccer” in \textit{Soccer and Society}, Volume 9, Number 3
\textsuperscript{19} Ed Jaggard “Sport History”, in Jenny Gregory and Jan Gothard, eds., \textit{Historical Encyclopedia of
Western Australia}, Crawley: University of Western Australia Press (2009), p. 837.
\textsuperscript{20} Jaggard, “Sport History”, p. 837.
in 1898 to the period immediately after World War II, football supporter Brian Atkinson’s *West Perth Football Club 1885-1985* and amateur soccer player Richard Kreider’s recent *Paddocks to Pitches: The Definitive History of Western Australian Football*, which traces the story of soccer in W.A. from the early 1890s.\(^{21}\) Others writing in this area are too numerous to name, but the most notable include bloodstock breeder Jenny Tomlinson, who wrote about the history of thoroughbred breeding and racing in W.A., and former cricket player and umpire Bill Reynolds, who wrote a history of grade cricket.\(^{22}\)

It is Jaggard’s second category – those written by journalists – that includes most publications concerning W.A. football. Perhaps the earliest of these was published in 1904 when *The Daily News* journalist A.W. Martin produced *The Australian Football Guide*, which attempted to cover every facet of the game and its development in each state of Australia.\(^{23}\) Martin and fellow *The Daily News* reporter E.H. Brewer were also responsible for the publication, in 1906, of *The West Australian Football Guide*, which was profusely illustrated and told the story of football in this state through various articles about players and grounds.\(^{24}\) Some 20 years later, journalist Leo Ryan and football administrator Billy Orr wrote *Western Australia’s Football Souvenir*, which was a much more readable attempt at a historical narrative.\(^{25}\) Geoff Christian’s *The Footballers: A History of Football in Western Australia* also fits into this category and was the first modern book to attempt to tell the story of football in this state.\(^{26}\) Other journalists to turn their hand to the writing of sporting history books include Alan East, Les Everett and Baden Pratt, all of whom have written extensively about football clubs, and former

---


The Western Mail editor Malcolm Uren, whose *Sails on the Swan: The History of the Royal Perth Yacht Club 1865-1965* belongs in this category despite him becoming an amateur historian later in life.27

The final category of sporting histories identified by Jaggard includes those written by commissioned historians, some of whom were contracted to write institutional histories.28 Kevin Casey’s *The Tigers’ Tale: The Origins and History of the Claremont Football Club*, for instance, is typical of the literature in this category. Largely chronological, it discusses the connections that shaped the club, including the school ties that have been influential at Claremont since the 1920s and the involvement of Aboriginal players from 1927. Casey further examines the importance of country recruits and family networks on the club.29 Anthony Barker’s books about the W.A.C.A. and W.A. football, both of which are thoroughly researched, fit squarely into this category. In *The WACA: An Australian Cricket Success Story*, Barker punctuates his factual account of the administration of cricket in pre-1900 W.A. with the occasional observation about the importance of the gentry in the sport’s development. Perhaps most pointedly, Barker links the gentry’s wishes for social order with the lack of respect for some very talented Aboriginal players and for gender roles that were forced upon women at cricket matches.30

Aside from these chronological narratives, very few professional historians have attempted to write about sport in Western Australia. The most important of the early attempts was by librarian and historian James Battye in *The Cyclopedia of Western Australia*. Battye took a largely empirical view of sport and recreation,

---


reporting in a straightforward manner the history of the major sports of the day – horseracing, cricket and the three codes of football – in the gentry tradition.31

Stoddart’s cultural and social analysis of early West Australian sport, produced in 1979, differs greatly from Battye’s work. At the heart of Stoddart’s study, “Sport and Society 1890-1940 a Foray”, is his contention that organised sport did more than just reflect the social life of the city. Stoddart argues it helped shape both the city’s structure and its relationships, with social control theory one of the key legs of his argument.32 Perhaps most telling is his analysis of the backgrounds of the men behind the W.A. Turf Club, which he contrasts with the backgrounds of those behind the less exclusive sport of trotting.33 Similar examinations of the men behind the W.A. Cricket Association and the early tennis associations, including detailed analyses of the familial connections and social status of the leading figures, provided further evidence for Stoddart’s claims about gentry control.34 Turning to the ways in which sport shaped, rather than reflected, the city’s structure, Stoddart argues that sport helped to build business and political relationships between men whose only connection was their shared love of a sport or a club. According to Jaggard, Stoddart’s analysis of the influence of sport upon the social and cultural values of Perth’s people “reflected new directions in one of history’s embryonic sub-disciplines, but this has been an example rarely followed” 35

Historian Tom Stannage borrowed heavily from Stoddart when writing the section on sport in his 1979 book, The People of Perth.36 Though commissioned by the City of Perth, the book differed from most municipal histories in that it placed a heavy emphasis on questions of social control.37 Stannage devotes several pages of the book to his study of sport and recreation during Perth’s formative years, lumping

31 J.S. Battye, ed., The cyclopedia of Western Australia: an historical and commercial review, descriptive and biographical facts, figures and illustrations: an epitome of progress Vol. 1, Adelaide: Hessey & Gillingham for The Cyclopedia Company (1913).
33 Stoddart, “Sport and Society 1890-1940 a Foray”, p. 658.
the subject in with religion and explaining he did so because both were tools of
social control.\textsuperscript{38} Stannage’s analysis of organised sport puts a heavy emphasis on
the prestige connected to the Western Australian Turf Club, which he describes as
“the sporting branch of the Weld Club”.\textsuperscript{39} His observations echo those of Stoddart
and he devotes considerable space to an analysis of gentry control in cricket, tennis
and lawn bowls.

Two more recent studies by Roy Stanley have also offered some social and cultural
analysis of 19\textsuperscript{th} century sport in the Swan River Colony. In the first, which formed his
honours thesis, Stanley argues cricket was important in integrating a society in
which class structure had initially caused division. By detailing the way in which
cricket had been opened up to the lower classes, Stanley claims the sport helped
overcome the class barriers evident in horse racing. He further argues that cricket
was the only sport that could achieve lasting homogeneity and cohesion, both
because it was the first organised team sport and because it was an imperialistic
institution.\textsuperscript{40} In his PhD thesis, Stanley makes further arguments about the
importance of sport in 19\textsuperscript{th} century W.A., especially as a distraction for settlers who
were subject to the Swan River Colony’s perilous conditions during the middle of
the century. Stanley argues, much as Stoddart and Stannage had, that sport helped
maintain order in both Perth and Fremantle, as well as being a catalyst for social
integration after 1890.\textsuperscript{41}

\textbf{METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES}

Having read through Victorian-era diaries during my research, I found there was little
reference to football or sport in W.A. during the period in question, other than the
occasional mention in the diaries of Alfred Hillman.\textsuperscript{42} As a result, and with no other

\textsuperscript{38} Stannage, \textit{The people of Perth}, p. 307.
\textsuperscript{39} Stannage, \textit{The people of Perth}, p. 310.
\textsuperscript{40} Roy Stanley, \textit{A Social History of Cricket in W.A. 1829-1885}, Honours Thesis, Murdoch University
(2002).
\textsuperscript{41} Roy Stanley, \textit{A Spot So Eligible For Settlement: Sport, Leisure, Class and Community and the Swan
\textsuperscript{42} Bentley Hillman, \textit{The Hillman diaries 1877-1884: the personal diaries of Alfred James Hillman from
primary evidence available, most of the information in this thesis has been gleaned from the reports published in the Perth and Fremantle newspapers from the 1850s to the 1880s. Other records that offered biographical information were used, especially to allow for the identification of individual footballers, including the Police Gazette of Western Australia, the extant electoral rolls from the turn of the century, the various post office directories published by H. Pierssene and H. Wise & Co and online genealogy databases. The most challenging aspect of the research was in dealing with events not covered by the newspapers. In particular, the newspapers failed to provide the names of those who supported one set of rules over another at each club.

My research concludes there were several factors that caused the local clubs to adopt the Victorian rules. I will argue that the first of these was that the people of W.A. had no strong connection to any particular code of football and, during the period between 1882 and 1884, the public became more and more dissatisfied with the way the sport was developing in W.A. under the Rugby Union rules. Previous historians, including Messenger, Barker and Steve Errington have also identified the public’s attitude towards the competing codes as being an important factor. I will argue, however, that there were also enough similarities between the new code (the Victorian rules) and the prevailing code (the Rugby Union rules) for the players to consider it acceptable to switch from one to another. While Barker recognised how similar the games looked and Norman Ashton remarked on the number of rules that were almost identical, little consideration has been given to the effect such similarities had on the events of 1885. I believe they were crucial because they allowed those who enjoyed playing under the Rugby Union rules to play the new code without abandoning all the features of the game they loved.

Newspaper reports will be used to show there was a core group of men who lobbied the clubs for change. Almost every book, paper and encyclopaedia entry

covering Western Australia’s adoption of the Victorian rules in 1885 gives credit to three men – Bill Bateman, Harry Herbert and Hugh Dixson.\(^{45}\) On many occasions, little evidence has been provided to substantiate such claims.\(^{46}\) I will argue that Bateman was the key figure at the Fremantle club, while the previously unheralded Charles Bishop led the charge at the Perth Rovers. These men fought a losing battle during the early years, when the Rugby Union rules were at their most popular. The disastrous football season of 1884 then opened the door for a renewed push for change. Herbert’s role in 1885 was minimal, but Dixson’s decision to form a new football club to play only under the Victorian rules was the deciding factor because it meant there was a clear majority of clubs in favour of the new code.

A prosopographical approach will be taken to show that migration from the eastern colonies also played an important role in forcing the change, but not through sheer weight of numbers. Previous historians have identified migration as being a factor in the events of 1885, but without providing evidence that any more than a handful of Western Australia’s footballers had previously played or watched the new code of football in the eastern colonies.\(^{47}\) In this thesis, I will examine the backgrounds of each and every identifiable person who was named in the press as having been a member of one of the three football clubs that completed the 1885 season. Such an examination will show that there were few interstate migrants at either the Fremantle or Perth Rovers clubs, but Dixson’s new Victorians Football Club was stacked with South Australians and Victorians.

By expanding the examination to consider the social class and connections of the footballers, I will further argue that these factors also played a significant role in the

---


events of 1885. Previous examinations of the effect that Western Australia’s social structure had on the battle between the codes have largely been limited to theories about social control. I will argue that the insularity and homogeneity of the middle and upper class members of the Fremantle and Perth Rovers clubs in the early 1880s weighed against the adoption of the Victorian rules and made it impossible for Bateman and Bishop to achieve their aims. In 1885, however, Dixson relied on a group of working class West Australians, who may not have fit in at the Perth Rovers, to help him and the other migrants from South Australia and Victoria form the new club. By challenging the mythologised view that a few great men were responsible for Western Australia’s adoption of the Victorian rules in 1885 and properly examining the role of migration and class in the decisions taken by each of the clubs, I provide a more nuanced view of the events that forever turned Western Australia towards the Australian game.

---

48 See Barker, Behind the Play, pp. 7-8.
CHAPTER 1
WHAT WAS WRONG WITH RUGBY?

Western Australia’s footballers did not suddenly decide en masse in April 1885 that they wanted to play their games under the Victorian rules, rather than the Rugby Union rules. Revolutions, even of the sporting kind, rarely start in this manner. In this first chapter, I will argue that interest in the Rugby Union code was at its lowest point when the change occurred and that the Rugby Union and Victorian codes were also very similar at that point in time. These factors combined to provide the perfect conditions for those lobbying for change, each of whom will be discussed in the next chapter. In order to evaluate the attitudes held towards football and toward the particular codes of football immediately before the adoption of the Victorian rules, it is first necessary to analyse the history of the game in Western Australia up to that point. It is then necessary to examine the rules of each game and how each game was actually played in 1885, so as to determine the level of similarity between them.

THE EARLY DAYS OF FOOTBALL IN PERTH

Though recent historians have tended to start their chronologies of West Australian football with a series of matches played between the locals and a visiting army regiment team in 1868, it is clear from contemporary newspaper reports that football was known in the colony well before this time. Football, in all its different incarnations, is an ancient sport in the British Isles and most of the white settlers would have been familiar with a variant of the sport before migrating to Australia. At least some then brought the game to Western Australia, though they played it irregularly and not necessarily as an organised game. Evidence of this can be seen in early newspaper reports, including one that reported on a festival held at Gingin in August 1862. “The scene soon wore a most lively aspect as the visitors to the number of about 130 dispersed over the field and began playing at cricket, football,

quoits, skittles, &c. The day was as fine as could be wished, and the merry-makers did not disperse until sundown.” In 1865, it was reported that students at Bishop Hale’s School in Perth (which later became “the High School” and was eventually the basis of “Hale School”) were often seen “practising football”. The residents of Geraldton, meanwhile, enjoyed a football match on New Year’s Day in 1867 and children at a fete in Perth that same year were given footballs to kick. From the nature of these reports, it would appear likely that these were not organised games, but rather a “kick-about” of the football, much as boys in school yards might do today. Those games that formed part of a town festival would likely have resembled what Roy Hay has called “village folk football”, which was played by big groups of people over vast areas, though “attenuated and confined by the authorities”. Whatever the case, it is precisely this lack of detail in the newspaper reports that has allowed recent historians to decide the games organised in 1868 constituted the birth of football in W.A.

While previous historians have reported the first organised football match in W.A. took place on 19 September 1868, an analysis of contemporary newspaper reports shows that the first of three matches played by the visiting members of the 14th Foot (Buckinghamshire) Regiment was actually played on 22 August 1868 in the grounds of the High School. The newspaper reports covering all three games give little indication as to which rules were employed, other than to rule out the British Association (soccer) rules, which were codified in 1863, by reference to the vigorous tackling that was employed. Errington suggests the combatants likely used the Victorian rules because the regiment had played under those rules in Melbourne.

---

58 “Friday, August 28th, 1868”, The Perth Gazette and West Australian Times, 28 August 1868, p. 2.
during 1867. Barker believes they may have used neither the Victorian rules nor the Rugby Union rules for the first game in Perth, claiming it was possibly played under a “still older British system of the best of three goals, regardless of the time taken to score them”. The newspapers, however, contradict Barker’s theory. Just weeks after the matches were played, *The Herald* printed the “laws of football” as a service to its readers, who had apparently become infatuated with the game since the 14th Foot Regiment landed. The insinuation was that these were the rules under which the 14th Foot’s games had been played. The published rules contained no method for determining how long a match should take nor how it should be decided. More importantly, *The Perth Gazette and West Australian Times* report of the first game in the series revealed the 14th Foot Regiment had won the match by five goals to nil, clearly ruling out a best-of-three scenario. The second match started on 18 September and was completed on 26 September, ending in a 2-1 victory to the regiment. The regiment also defeated the Metropolitan Rifle Volunteers by the same margin, while a match was played in Fremantle between the Fremantle Temperance and Recreation Society and the townsfolk in October. In 1869, the Perth and Fremantle Cricket Clubs played a football match after the completion of a late-season cricket match, and a team of government officials played a team of tradesmen in Perth later that same year. Interest in the game then dissipated.

The 1870s saw few organised football matches in the colony. There was a game in 1876 between teams from the Perth Boys School and the Fremantle Boys School and another the same year involving Perth mechanics and apprentices. In 1878, the Perth Football Club was formed, which is thought to have organised two

---

59 Steve Errington, Disorderly Proceedings in the Park: Western Australian Football in Colonial Times, unpublished manuscript in the possession of Steve Errington, pp. 5-6.
60 Barker, *Behind the Play*, p. 3.
61 “Football”, *The Herald*, 17 October 1868, p. 3.
matches that were played under the Rugby Union rules in July. In 1879 the High School’s football club was formed. It is clear from a letter to the editor of The Western Australian Times in May 1879 that local football enthusiasts were unhappy with the lack of football on offer. In his letter, “Old Boy” professed his wish that football would be added to the winter calendar, arguing the game kept young men healthy and away from other “temptations”. He closed his letter by expressing the hope that a new football club would be formed, or an old one resuscitated, soon.

It did not take long for Old Boy’s letter to be answered, albeit in the competing The Inquirer and Commercial News. In his letter, “Citizen” endorsed the comments made by Old Boy and urged Lieutenant St. John Ord – the son of Governor Sir Harry Ord and the man who organised the 1878 matches – to again form a proper club. A subsequent column in The Western Australian Times about injuries suffered by young footballers at the High School may have put a dampener on the enthusiasm of anyone interested in forming a team, while later reports of the death of a footballer in Victoria were also unfortunately timed. It appears the matter was then left to rest because no football games were reported by the press in 1880. It is clear, therefore, that organised football was a rarity in the colony to the end of 1880. While some settlers may have been familiar with the Rugby Union rules or the British Association rules before arriving in Western Australia, few of the settlers would have seen enough football played locally to become wedded to a particular code. Most would likely have known football as being nothing more than the act of kicking a ball around and would, therefore, have had an open mind about the set of rules under which Western Australia’s footballers should play. For a table of all known organised football games played in Perth and Fremantle before the end of 1881, see Appendix 1.

In May 1881 football was re-born after the High School, which boasted a series of connections with the Rugby School itself, officially adopted the laws of rugby for its football games. While the amount of football played by the boys at the High School had clearly increased under the guidance of outgoing headmaster Richard Davies, who was educated at the rugby-playing Haileybury College in Berkshire and at Cambridge’s Corpus Christi College, it is likely the decision to officially adopt the laws of rugby was influenced by the new headmaster, Thomas Beuttler, who arrived in about March of that year from the Grammar School at Chudleigh, in Devonshire. Educated at the Rugby School and at Cambridge’s Queen’s College, he was described as a “first-rate cricketer and football player”. It is unlikely he would have promoted any form of football other than that played at the Rugby School, which had first codified its game in 1845. An analysis of match reports from The West Australian newspaper confirms the four games the High School played against the townsfolk and others in June and July of 1881, which were the only competitive games reported to have taken place in Perth or Fremantle that season, were played under the Rugby Union rules. In one report, the pseudonymous “Looker On” clearly refers to the fact that very few of the boys had played “rugby union” before the first game against the Town Fifteen. This short 1881 season, along with the opening of a new central recreation ground next to the Swan River, caused an explosion of interest in football in 1882. Five new clubs were formed, two of which would survive long enough to be involved in the transition to the Victorian rules in 1885.

THE BEST OF TIMES AND THE WORST OF TIMES: FOOTBALL 1882-1884

In 1882, football reigned supreme in Western Australia during winter. As already discussed, the game did not have deep roots within the community before this period, though it was likely known to most of the settlers. A thorough analysis of

73 Errington, “Chasing Leather and Choosing a Code”, p. 66; Barker, Behind The Play, p. 4.
77 Errington, “Chasing Leather and Choosing a Code”, p. 68.
the newspaper reports carried by *The West Australian*, *The Daily News*, *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, and *The Herald* between 1882 and 1884 shows that football during this era was poorly organised, while controversy marked many of the games. When read as a whole, the amount of criticism, both overt and veiled, contained within the pages of these four newspapers provides enough evidence to suggest there was much dissatisfaction with the game as played in Perth in the years leading up to the change of rules in 1885. For a table of all known organised football games played in Perth and Fremantle between 1882 and 1884, see Appendix 2.

Perhaps the most serious problem with the game played under the Rugby Union rules was that there was no central body to ensure everything ran smoothly. Because there were no regular fixtures, it was impossible for players to ensure their availability for matches and just as difficult for members of the public to support their chosen team.⁷⁸ Further, there was no title or trophy for the best team each year and no way of even determining which team was the best. For instance, while Fremantle could claim to have been the best team in 1882 and the undefeated Perth Rovers were clearly best in 1883, the only club matches played in 1884 were between a Fremantle team and a team of Perth juniors. The Perth Rovers chose, instead, to play scratch matches amongst themselves and not even the newspapers could explain why so few games were played that year.⁷⁹

An analysis of newspaper articles from 1882 shows that 18 organised games of football were reported to have been played under the Rugby Union rules in Perth and Fremantle that year, seven of them between the three organised clubs – Perth, Perth Rovers and Fremantle.⁸⁰ Other matches were planned, but there is no evidence they took place. The lack of organisation, however, of what amounted to an informal league was evident very early in that first season when the newspapers covered the efforts of the Fremantle team to organise a match against the Perth Rovers. The Fremantle-based *The Herald* reported that the Rovers had accepted the

---

⁷⁹ “Flashes”, *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 13 August 1884, p. 5.
⁸⁰ Newspaper reports were found in *The West Australian*, *The Daily News*, *The Herald* and *The Inquirer and Commercial News* between 16 May 1882 and 8 September 1882.
challenge to play the match on Foundation Day (June 1) in Fremantle, but some
Rovers players had then tried to back out of the match because of other sports
events that would take place in Perth that day. The Herald chided the Rovers,
claiming they were “honour bound” to make the trip to the port. Though the
match in Fremantle did go ahead, without a few key Rovers players, the “return”
match in Perth later that month was also something of a debacle, according to The
Herald. The Rovers players did not take the field until 25 minutes after the
Fremantle players had been ready to start, the ground was sodden after heavy rains
and the umpires failed to see some of the key disputed incidents in the match.
Perhaps worst of all for The Herald scribe was that it “was noticeable that the
Fremantle backs could not run away as they did in their own field, as the ground at
Perth measured 100 by 50 yards instead of 130 by 75 - the proper dimensions.”

Things got markedly worse on this front in 1883. By the middle of the year, the
Perth club was unable to field a team and few matches took place after that time.
Just six matches were reported to have been played in 1883 and only three of those
were between the organised clubs. A sport that looked to have a bright future just
12 months earlier was clearly on the wane. In the middle of 1884 came one of the
low points for football when a miscommunication between the Perth Rovers and
the Fremantle Unions caused the Rovers to send a weakened second-string side to
play against what was expected to be an under-strength Unions side. Instead,
Unions turned out a much stronger team, stacked with army men. “Nothing
daunted, the Perth Boys played skillfully but were over matched. After the game
was over the Perth team were followed through the town and stoned and hooted
by the larrikins in such a manner that the proceedings reflected little credit upon
the number of grown-up youths who took part in the annoyance. The ‘Perth
herrings’ are not likely to visit the ‘Fremantle mullets’ very often if they are not
treated with the same respect and consideration which is accorded to visitors to the
City,” The Daily News reported. Indeed, there were few matches played for the
rest of that season, despite The Inquirer and Commercial News reporting that those

84 “Thursday, June 26, 1884”, The Daily News, 26 June 1884, p. 3.
responsible for the incident in Fremantle were not Unions supporters, but “larrikins, who unhappily predominate on such occasions, and are as much a nuisance to one as the other side”. Perhaps it was this incident that led the Perth Rovers to decide against playing against other clubs during the remainder of the 1884 season. Instead, they simply played matches amongst themselves and sent their “juniors” out for the return match against the Fremantle Unions in July. There is also no record of Fremantle playing games in 1884 and the competition, as it were, appeared to be falling apart. The journalist “Spex” certainly seemed to think so when writing in 1885 about the previous football season. “Last year football had reached a very low ebb, the healthy and exhilarating rivalry of 1882-83 had been replaced by the lethargy of 1884. Those who, like myself are fond of the noble game were fearful lest it should go the way of all things athletic, lest its eager welcome should prove to be but the prelude to its early and complete abandonment.”

While the lack of a central body to organise the competition clearly hampered the game’s progress in the early 1880s, it was not the only problem. A perception that football played under the Rugby Union rules was too rough was clearly prevalent. The earliest evidence of this can be seen in 1878 when one football supporter, who was pleased there were moves afoot to get the game started in Perth, wrote to the editor of The Western Australian Times to explain away the injuries suffered during football games as “incidental to all games requiring strength and physical endurance”. He suggested the rules could be changed to reduce the risk of injury, but the specific rules he suggested would have turned the game into one that would have resembled what we now know as soccer. He was not the only supporter of football who felt the need to defend the sport from critics. In 1882, The Herald columnist “Telephone” wrote that the number of casualties in football was actually far less than most people thought. “Although by the laws of Rugby Union, ‘hacking’ is prohibited, yet an occasional ‘shinner’ is inevitable. I would suggest that all such casualties should in future be known as hack-sidents.”

---

85 “Notes from the Port”, The Inquirer and Commercial News, 2 July 1884, p. 5.
88 “Football”, The Western Australian Times, 6 August 1878, p. 2.
89 “Football”, The Western Australian Times, 6 August 1878, p. 2.
Telephone wrote. Later in 1882, “Damaged Footballer” tried to turn the bad publicity into a positive. In a letter to The West Australian, he argued that Rugby Union football was the only game which prepared men for war. The risk of injury was no reason to shun the game, he argued. Just a month later, The Inquirer and Commercial News ran an article written by the Sydney correspondent for the Federal Australian in which he bemoaned the number of injuries suffered by footballers. “Even a blind man can tell a football player at the first sight. The latter never wears more than one ear and about the same number of eyes; his nose looks like a bit of liver stretched across a thimble; one arm is bent backwards at the elbow; he appears to have two left legs, and he carries about as much scalp to the square inch as a catfish does.”

The response to the Sydneysider’s article could hardly be described as a “vigorous defence”. In fact, the Fremantle correspondent for The Inquirer and Commercial News simply responded by urging the players to be more careful. “This season we have already had two serious misadventures. It is but a few days ago that Mr. G. Parker broke his arm when at practice, and now I have to record that during the match which was played last Wednesday by the Perth and Fremantle clubs Mr. Fred. Gallop sustained a severe injury to his shoulder. There is no doubt that such rough play should be tabooed, or else that those that value life and limb should give up the game. After all, it rests with the players themselves whether they shall deserve the reprobation that has lately been so liberally bestowed upon them.” A contributor to The West Australian was also scathing of the roughness exhibited by the Fremantle team in that particular game. “I object to be always cavilling, but really the manner in which some of the Fremantle XV threw their opponents, even when the latter were some distance from the ball, calls for remark. In the first place it is quite unnecessary, and in the second it is not football, besides being very apt to create unpleasantness.”

---

93 “Port notes”, The Inquirer and Commercial News, 26 July 1882, p. 5.
By mid-1883, The Daily News was prompted to offer some comment about the number of injuries suffered by footballers after three players were hurt in the same game. “Evidently the Rugby Union Rules do not exclude either rough play or the occurrence of accidents. As this is the only objection urged against the adoption of the Victorian Association Rules it is a pity that our footballers will not consent to play the game according to the rules followed in the other Australian Colonies as they thus exclude themselves from the possibility of ever being able to join in an Intercolonial Match.”

The suggestion that W.A. ruled itself out of intercolonial competition by sticking with the Rugby Union code was a common one. It was raised as early as 1882 – the first year of football’s resurgence. In fact, the first shot was fired before the matches had even started, when “G” penned a letter to the editor of The West Australian in which he rejoiced in the fact that the football season would soon begin, but suggested the adoption of the Victorian rules. “The Victorian or ‘Bouncing’ rules are those which are universally adopted in the other Australian colonies; why then should West Australia be the exception? It is needless here to enter into an argument as to which is the better of the two games, but supposing West Australia were to receive a challenge at football from one of the sister colonies, what must be our reply? ‘We are not able to accept your challenge, because we do not know your rules.’”

Of course, there was a swift reply from those loyal to the Rugby Union rules, although it came from a letter writer who called himself “One Who is Not a Rugby Man”. He wrote that almost all football in New South Wales and New Zealand was played under the Rugby Union rules and W.A. would have little trouble in finding an intercolonial opponent should it wish to do so. Nevertheless, such claims continued and were made regularly by those who wanted change in the period between 1882 and 1884. For instance, in one of the newspaper reports which reported the formation of W.A.’s first Victorian Rules club in 1883, the writer suggested all clubs move to that code because “the Rugby rules are being superseded by those of the Victorian, in the other colonies”.

---

95 “Friday, May 4, 1883”, The Daily News, 4 May 1883, p. 3.
There were still further criticisms of football as played in Perth under the Rugby Union rules. One was that the local players did not know how to play the game properly and had little knowledge of the rules. In early 1882 there were claims in the press that football in Fremantle appeared “a somewhat novel game to those who have seen it elsewhere” because every player on the ground abandoned his position to chase the ball.\(^99\) To be fair, the game would have been new to most of the combatants in those first few weeks of club football, however, things had evidently not improved a few weeks later when *The West Australian*’s correspondent decried the Fremantle team’s lack of knowledge of the rules. He also suggested they not complain to the umpire and not threaten the opposition if they were tripped over. “Tripping, no doubt, is a heinous offence but that is no reason why a man should threaten that ‘if anyone trips me, I shan't trip him back, but give him something else,’ - meaning, I suppose, some more severe punishment,” the correspondent wrote.\(^100\) The city newspaper’s criticism of the Fremantle team’s lack of knowledge of the rules continued throughout that first season.\(^101\) Criticism of the standard of the games played in Perth and Fremantle continued into 1883. In advocating a change to the Victorian Rules, the pseudonymous “Little Mark” wrote in a letter to *The Daily News* that there was little satisfaction to be gained by watching football as it had been played in W.A. in 1882.\(^102\) The opening practice match of the 1883 season would have done little to change that perception, according to *The West Australian*’s correspondent, who said the players held on to the ball for far too long. “If men would only stick to the letter of the rules, and put the ball down the instant it was fairly held, instead of struggling on a few paces, they would find that the Rugby Union game would be infinitely more attractive both to themselves and to the public generally. As played now in Perth, football resolves itself into one continuous round of close scrummages, which are neither edifying to spectators nor exciting to the wretched backs, who have to stand shivering in their shoes while the forwards are getting rapidly pumped out,” he wrote.\(^103\) The

---

\(^100\) “Occasional Notes”, *The West Australian*, 20 June 1882, p. 2.
\(^102\) “Football”, *The Daily News*, 24 April 1883, p. 3.
\(^103\) “Occasional Notes”, *The West Australian*, 4 May 1883, p. 3.
correspondent finished his article by reporting a trial of the Victorian rules was being considered, but he doubted it would draw more people than the British code. Clearly, the game was struggling, and the scribe knew it. “Unless the inhabitants of Perth take more interest in manly games they may rest assured that those games will gradually die out as there is nothing more disheartening than playing to empty benches,” he wrote.\textsuperscript{104}

\textbf{THE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE RUGBY UNION RULES AND THE VICTORIAN RULES IN 1885}

In 1885, the Rugby Union rules and the Victorian rules were not as dissimilar as they are today. The games did, in fact, bear a striking resemblance to one another. Professor Geoffrey Blainey argues that the Victorian game was invented in the late 1850s while the competing brands of British football (later called the Rugby Union rules and British Association rules) were in a state of flux through a lack of codification. The Victorian rules borrowed heavily from the rugby game, but adapted so often and so quickly to local conditions and the whims of those involved that it soon became its own distinctive game.\textsuperscript{105} By the time the earliest known football match was played in Perth, in 1868, the protagonists had the choice of several written sets of rules, including the latest rugby rules, the Football Association rules and the rapidly-evolving Victorian rules. And, as already discussed, by the end of 1884, there was plenty of dissatisfaction with football as played under the Rugby Union rules. While I have already argued that this dissatisfaction provided the perfect environment for supporters of the Victorian game to lobby for change, it was just as important that the Victorian rules and the Rugby Union rules were not dissimilar. It is extremely unlikely that those men who enjoyed playing football under the Rugby Union rules could have been convinced to adopt a set of rules that would have changed the essence of their chosen sport entirely. In the Victorian rules, they had a compromise that would also solve many of the complaints made about the Rugby Union rules over the previous few years.

\textsuperscript{104} “Occasional Notes”, \textit{The West Australian}, 4 May 1883, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{105} Geoffrey Blainey, \textit{A Game of Our Own. The Origins of Australian Football}, Melbourne: Information Australia (1990), pp. 7-23.
To determine how similar the codes were at the time of the switch, it is first necessary to examine the rules of each sport as they stood in early 1885. At that point in time, the Rugby Union code was the prevailing rugby-style game. Britain’s Rugby League was not created until 1895 when a group from the north of England broke away from the union and started to modify the rules. As a result, I will focus on the Rugby Union rules. William J. Baker argued the game colloquially known as rugby was developed at the Rugby School, in Warwickshire, in the middle of the nineteenth century because it was geographically isolated from other public schools, allowing the boys to develop their own game without reference to other forms of football. The game was first codified in 1845 before the Rugby Football Union was formed by English clubs in 1871 and new laws were written. Until the formation of the International Board in 1886, rugby was played under the 1871 laws. It is therefore likely that games in Perth were played under those laws, though there was ample room for local variation. As Steve Errington explains in his paper “Chasing Leather and Choosing a Code”, there was no controlling body for football in Western Australia between 1882 and 1884 and matches were organised only when one club secretary wrote to another and proposed a date and time. As a result, it was for the clubs to determine the rules under which any match would be played and no official sets of rules are known to have been produced. Newspaper reports about the activities of the clubs provide proof, however, that the matches conducted between 1882 and 1884 were played under the Rugby Union rules. For example, in 1882 it was reported that a meeting of a newly formed football club (Perth) had adopted the “Rugby Union rules”. Similarly, the Perth Rovers Football Club voted in 1883 to “continue to play the Rugby Union rules”, while Anthony

Barker writes that the High School adopted the “Laws of Rugby on 28 May 1881”. It must be assumed that matches played by these teams, and indeed the few other clubs that played against them between 1882 and 1884, were all played under the 1871 Rugby Union rules, possibly with a few local variations.

The Victorian rules were also subject to an abundance of variation before the turn of the last century. The earliest surviving set of rules was drawn up by the Melbourne Football Club in 1859 and was largely influenced by Thomas Wills, who attended the Rugby School in the early 1850s and would have seen first-hand the development of the Rugby Union game. By the time the Perth and Fremantle clubs switched to the Victorian rules in 1885, however, those rules had been heavily refined from the 1859 version. At a meeting at the Criterion Hotel on 8 May 1885, the W.A. Football Association was formed by the committees of the Fremantle, Rovers and Victorians Football Clubs. Fremantle and Rovers were both established clubs which previously played matches under the Rugby Union rules. Both had voted to play the 1885 season under the Victorian rules. Victorians was a newly formed club, which had also decided to play under the Victorian rules. At this meeting, it was decided that the teams would instead use the slightly modified rules of the Adelaide and Suburban Football Association “subject to one or two alterations to adapt them to local circumstances”. Norman Ashton, in the soon-to-be-published *Fremantle Football: The Origins 1885 to 1904*, writes that no copy of the Adelaide and Suburban Football Association rules for 1885 survives. However, he claims “careful analysis of available sources” allowed him to determine the rules under which games were played. Dr Ashton’s suggested set of rules for 1885 is identical to a list published in 1979 in Perth Football Club’s *Grandstand News*, which purported to be the 1885 rules. It is not known where Perth Football Club discovered these 1885 rules.
Dr Ashton’s list of Victorian rules used in Western Australia in 1885 allow for a comparison with the 1871 Rugby Union rules, which were used in W.A. between 1882 and 1884 and were published in Owen Llewellyn Owen’s *The History of the Rugby Football Union*. The first similarity was in the ground that was used. Though the rules did not specify the shape of the playing field, matches played under the Victorian rules were played on a rectangular ground at the time, just as games played under the Rugby Union rules have always been. Under the Victorian rules, the ball to be used was a “No. 2 size rugby, 26 inches in circumference”. Both the Victorian rules and the Rugby Union rules specified, in almost identical terms, that a drop-kick was made by letting the ball drop from the hands on to the ground and kicking it the very instant it rose, a place-kick was made by kicking the ball after it had been placed on the ground and a punt kick was made by letting the ball fall from the hands and kicking it before it touched the ground. Both games started with a kick off from the centre of the ground, at which time all a team’s players were required to be in their own half. Both sets of rules provided players the opportunity to take a “mark” when catching the ball directly from the boot of another player and both forced players to drop the ball to the ground immediately when tackled. Both sets of rules also provided that matches were only to be decided by a majority of goals, not by other methods (for instance, by tries in the Rugby Union game or by behinds in the Victorian game). In applauding the move by the local clubs to make the switch to the Victorian rules, *The West Australian* clearly recognised how similar the two sets of rules were. Football under the Victorian rules was described to readers as “the Rugby Union game divested of its ‘off sides’ and ‘scrimmages,’ and with a rule added that the ball, if carried in the hands, must be bounced on the ground every few yards”.

In noting the similarities between the two sets of rules in 1885, it is just as important to consider the manner in which games played under these rules appeared to spectators in 1885. Contemporary newspaper reports use the same language and terms to describe the matches played during the first year of the

---

119 “Sporting. Football”, *The West Australian*, 13 May 1885, p. 3.
Victorian rules as they had during the three years played under the Rugby Union rules. Barker notes that early football match reports suggest the new game was “probably still as close to rugby’s mauling scrimmages” as it was to the high-speed game played today.  

This was because behinds did not count towards the score, making goals even more important. As a result, the teams employed a massed defence. Other rules added to the bunching and congestion, including one that allowed players to take a mark once the ball had travelled three yards directly from another’s boot. And 20 players were allowed on the field for each team.

Perhaps what saved the Victorian rules from being tossed aside was that they continued to evolve. As the 1880s gave way to the 1890s, and then the new millennium, the Victorian rules allowed for a game that was much more free-flowing and far more lively than the “round of close scrimmages” that was evident in matches played under the Rugby Union rules between 1882 and 1884. And while the organisers of those early seasons of football under the Victorian rules were forced to deal with many of the same problems as the Rugby Union pioneers had, they managed to keep their game going until it was so popular that no challenger could possibly knock it from its pedestal. In some ways, it was probably lucky for supporters of the Victorian rules that those who preferred the Rugby Union rules had shown them what not to do. Between 1882 and 1884, the clubs’ failure to form a controlling body was a major factor in the organisational problems that beset the game, while reports of the growing popularity of the Victorian rules in the other colonies caused fears that W.A. would have little prospect of playing intercolonial football if it did not switch codes. Meanwhile, the local players’ lack of knowledge of the Rugby Union rules and appropriate playing tactics, and the number of injuries suffered during play, contributed to a downturn in interest in football, both from the spectators and from the players themselves. This damaging cocktail of disinterest and disillusionment provided the perfect environment for those seeking to supplant the Rugby Union rules with the Victorian

---

120 Barker, 
121 Barker, 
122 “Occasional Notes”, The West Australian, 4 May 1883, p. 3. 
123 Macintyre, “The ‘Bouncing Game’ in Fremantle”, pp. 133-134.
rules. Further, the similarities between the two sets of rules made such a change palatable, whereas moves to switch to dissimilar rules, such as the Football Association (soccer) rules, would likely have been met with fierce resistance. Once the Victorian rules were adopted, those who masterminded the change quickly showed they had learnt from the mistakes made by those who supported the Rugby Union rules. It took just days after the Perth Rovers and Fremantle clubs adopted the Victorian rules for the W.A. Football Association to be formed as football’s controlling body.\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{124} Errington, "Chasing Leather and Choosing a Code", p. 71.
CHAPTER 2
WHICH OF THE “GREAT MEN” DESERVE SOME CREDIT?

As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, historians writing about the early days of West Australian football have generally given credit for the adoption of the Victorian rules in 1885 to one or more from a group of three men. None of these historians, however, has provided substantial evidence of the roles played by William Augustus Bateman, Henry Albert “Harry” Herbert and Hugh Robert Dixson, all of whom were teenagers in 1885.125 Further, most have treated the decision to abandon the Rugby Union rules as a singular decision taken by the footballers of Western Australia. There was no such decision; the members of each of the clubs made their own decision to adopt the Victorian rules. They then joined the W.A. Football Association, which was formed as the controlling body for the Victorian rules competition in 1885. The most powerful of these clubs was the Perth Rovers, which was undefeated under the Rugby Union rules in 1883 and continued playing among themselves under those rules in 1884 when it appeared there were no suitable opponents. None of the key trio – Bateman, Herbert and Dixson - was a member of the Perth Rovers, leaving open the question as to why that club chose to adopt the Victorian rules at all.

In this chapter, I will argue that these three “great men” certainly have their place in the history of West Australian football, but the situation was far more complex than has previously been indicated. As already discussed in the previous chapter, the men who pushed for the adoption of the Victorian rules would likely have failed had there not been general dissatisfaction with the Rugby Union rules or had the Victorian rules not been so similar to the Rugby Union rules at that point in history. Because of this prevailing attitude, Bateman likely met with less resistance when he pushed for change at Fremantle Football Club. Fremantle’s decision, however, did

not spell the end for the Rugby Union rules. This was just one club and it could have all been in vain had none of the other clubs made the switch. Another founding father, who will be revealed as Canadian-born Charles Bishop, was instrumental in gathering support for the Victorian rules at the Perth Rovers Football Club. In turn, Bishop would have ultimately failed if it was not for the strategically-timed formation of the Victorians Football Club, which was led by Hugh Dixson. Other men also played their part.

**THE FREMANTLE CLUB**

Given Bateman and Herbert were both members of the Fremantle club, which was the first to adopt the Victorian rules, it is appropriate to start by examining the primary evidence relating to those who pushed for change at the port club. The key piece of evidence concerning the club’s decision to adopt the Victorian rules is the rather short newspaper report of its 1885 general meeting at the Cleopatra Hotel, which was published in *The West Australian* on 29 April 1885. “An animated discussion ensued on the question of the rules under which the club should play this season. The majority present ultimately decided in favor of the association game as played in some adjoining colonies.” The use of the term “association game” in the report is somewhat confusing, because it is the term usually used to refer to the game we now know as soccer. It may be explained, however, by reference to the fact that top-level football under the Victorian rules was administered by the Victorian Football Association in Melbourne and by the South Australian Football Association in Adelaide in 1885. What’s perhaps more important is that the report did little more than note that the club had made the decision to play the forthcoming season under the Victorian rules. No further information was provided about the reasons for the decision, nor, indeed, which members supported the decision and which did not. The report continued by naming those members who had been unanimously elected as the club’s officers for the season: “Messrs. W. A. Bateman, captain, H. Albert, junr., vice-captain, A.

---

127 “News and Notes”, *The West Australian*, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
128 “News and Notes”, *The West Australian*, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
Newman, secretary and treasurer, and Messrs. W. C. H. Hooper, and J. O'Connell as members of Committee to act with the other officers who are members of Committee by virtue of their offices.” It is unlikely that, from this information alone, previous historians could have come to the conclusion that Bateman and Herbert were instrumental in the Fremantle club adopting the Victorian rules at the annual meeting of 1885. After all, Herbert was not even named in the report.

There are, however, other pieces of evidence that can be used to support an assertion that Bateman and Herbert supported the move. The first is the background of the men themselves. Previous historians have placed a heavy emphasis on their having played football under the Victorian rules during their schooling in Adelaide. Some have even reported that they were schooled at Prince Alfred College, which was one of the early bastions of the Victorian rules game in Adelaide. While there is no record of their having attended Prince Alfred College, either in newspapers of the day or in the college’s own records, there is at least some evidence they were schooled in Adelaide, including Bateman’s obituary in The Western Mail in 1935. “He was educated at Adelaide, and when he returned to Fremantle he became an active advocate of the Australian code of football, which he helped to establish here.” But perhaps the greatest indicator that Bateman and Herbert supported the adoption of the Victorian rules are the newspaper reports covering the formation of the Swan Football Club on 12 April 1883. The first report, carried by The Daily News on 16 April and The Inquirer and Commercial News two days later, reveals that the meeting was held at Fremantle and that about 20 members had attended, deciding to play “the Victorian Association game, which is now generally adopted in all the other Colonies, in the place of the Rugby game.” Bateman was named as captain and Herbert as sub-captain, while Andrew Thomas Jackson was named as secretary. The report in The West Australian, which was published a few days later, contains no further

130 “News and Notes”, The West Australian, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
131 Barker, Behind The Play, p. 5; Messenger, “The Fourteenth Foot”, p. 4.
132 Ashton, Fremantle Football, pp. 43-49, (in press); “Death of Mr. W.A. Bateman”, The Western Mail, 1 August 1935, p. 10.
information.\textsuperscript{134} It seems reasonable to assume that those most involved in the foundation of the new club would have been those voted into senior positions with that club. Bateman, Herbert and Jackson are, therefore, likely to have been heavily involved in the formation of the Swan Football Club. They were, in all likelihood, the three most ardent founding members, though nothing is known of the other members, numbering about 17, because the activities of the Swan Football Club never again graced the pages of any of the colony’s newspapers despite reports by more recent historians that they played a few intra-club matches.\textsuperscript{135}

The fact that Bateman and Herbert clearly had some role in the formation of the first club in W.A. to adopt the Victorian rules is a good indication that they would have supported the adoption of the Victorian rules by the Fremantle club in 1885. Herbert had played under the Rugby Union rules with the Fremantle team in 1882.\textsuperscript{136} For him to be involved in the formation of a new Victorian rules club in 1883, it must be considered likely he had some preference for the Victorian rules game. He made no similar attempt to form a club to play under the Rugby Union rules after that code was abandoned in 1885. Further, Bateman’s election as the captain of the 1885 Fremantle team took place at the same meeting at which that club finally adopted the Victorian rules.\textsuperscript{137}

In claiming Bateman and Herbert had successfully driven Fremantle to adopt the Victorian rules in 1885, past historians have offered little in the way of analysis of the position of the Fremantle club at the time. Both men were born at Fremantle, Bateman on 11 September 1866 and Herbert on 19 December 1865.\textsuperscript{138} As already discussed, they were likely two of the senior figures behind the establishment of the Swan Football Club in early 1883, aged 16 and 17 respectively. At that point in time, both men were also playing football under the Rugby Union rules for the Fremantle

\textsuperscript{134} “Country Letters”, The West Australian, 20 April 1883, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{135} Errington, “Chasing Leather and Choosing a Code”, p. 71.
\textsuperscript{137} “News and Notes”, The West Australian, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{138} Ashton, Fremantle Football, pp. 43-49; Searching WA Online Indexes http://www.bdm.dotag.wa.gov.au/_apps/pioneersindex/, Henry Albert Herbert, Birth Registration No. 8934 of 1865, accessed online 8 June 2015.
It is likely the pair would first have tried to convince the Fremantle Football Club to adopt the Victorian rules. At such a young age, however, they could not be expected to win such a battle, especially when an analysis of the newspaper reports from the period shows the 1882 Rugby Union season included more games than in either 1883 or 1884. Interest in football was at its peak and a couple of teenagers recently returned from Adelaide were unlikely to convince the Fremantle club, which proved itself the best in the colony in 1882 by winning five matches and losing just one, to abandon the game which it was dominating. The formation of the Swan Football Club would have been the only avenue open to them to play under the Victorian rules.

By the end of 1884, however, that position had changed markedly. Bateman and Herbert were 18 and 19 respectively. More importantly, an analysis of newspapers from 1884 shows that the Fremantle club was not reported to have played a single game of football during that season. At the annual meeting in May 1884, nine men were appointed as office holders and it was decided to practice daily and hold intra-club matches on Wednesday afternoons. But this was the last newspaper report concerning the Fremantle club published by any of the newspapers in 1884. No longer was it the all-conquering club it had been in 1882 when Bateman and Herbert had no choice but to create a new football club to satisfy their desire for games to be played under the Victorian rules. The Fremantle club was one that, for all intents and purposes, was defunct.

As a result, the Victorian rules advocates simply needed to pick up what was left of the club and its members, hold a meeting and move a motion that the Victorian rules be adopted. Though *The West Australian* reported that the discussion was “animated”, the opposition which Bateman and Herbert faced in 1883 must have been much more fierce. Unfortunately, none of the newspapers give any indication as to the number of members who voted nor the identities of those who spoke during the “animated” discussion of 1885. It would, however, seem likely that

---

139 “Friday, June 8, 1883”, *The Daily News*, 8 June 1883, p. 3; “Football”, *The Daily News*, 3 August 1883, p. 3.
140 “Country News”, *The West Australian*, 22 May 1884, p. 3.
141 “News and Notes”, *The West Australian*, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
those who were voted into office at this meeting would have been advocates of the Victorian rules, or at least not vehemently opposed to them. The backgrounds of each of these men will be discussed in the next chapter, as part of a prosopographical study of all those known to have played football in the W.A. Football Association competition of 1885. However, a short examination here will help determine whether any played an important role in the Fremantle club’s decision.

Little more needs to be said about William Augustus Bateman, who clearly supported the adoption of the Victorian rules and was the pre-eminent player in the W.A. Football Association competition for the first ten years of its existence.\textsuperscript{142} Henry William Albert, the vice-captain, was the son of a butcher and was born at Fremantle in 1861. He was well-respected at the port and started playing football with the Fremantle club under the Rugby Union rules in 1882, continuing well after the adoption of the Victorian rules.\textsuperscript{143} His election as vice-captain would suggest he was a supporter of the new code. Aubrey Woodward Newman, the secretary and treasurer, may also have been a supporter of the Victorian rules. He was never reported to have played for Fremantle under the Rugby Union rules, but did play under the Victorian rules during 1885 before stepping down as secretary for work reasons in August of that year.\textsuperscript{144} William Courtois Henry Hooper was brought up in Bendigo in Victoria and was a jeweller and prominent freemason. He also became involved in cycling at the port.\textsuperscript{145} He played for Fremantle under the Rugby Union rules in 1882 and umpired games in 1883.\textsuperscript{146} There is no evidence he played football under the Victorian rules at all. Finally, Irish-born John Joseph O’Connell, the local manager for the Singer Sewing Machine company, was never reported to have played for Fremantle under the Rugby Union rules.\textsuperscript{147} He was elected to the

\textsuperscript{142} Norman Ashton, \textit{Fremantle Football}, p. 43, (in press).
\textsuperscript{143} “News of the day”, \textit{The Inquirer and Commercial News}, 29 May 1889, p. 3; “Fremantle. The Football Match”, \textit{The Herald}, 3 June 1882, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{144} Errington, “Chasing Leather and Choosing a Code”, p. 72.
\textsuperscript{145} “Masonic Ball”, \textit{The West Australian}, 23 August 1884, p. 2; “Saturday, September 10th, 1881”, \textit{The Herald}, 10 September 1881, p. 2; “News in Brief”, \textit{The Inquirer and Commercial News}, 30 August 1882, p. 7; “Genesis of Cycling in our State”, \textit{The Daily News}, 26 August 1933, p. 14.
\textsuperscript{147} “The Old Brigade”, \textit{W.A. Sportsman}, 17 July 1914, p. 6.
committee in 1885 and then played a few games that season under the Victorian rules. It is quite likely he was a supporter of the new code, especially as he spent a year in Victoria before moving to Western Australia in about 1882. While there is little in the backgrounds of any of these men that allows for a definitive assertion that they were vocal supporters of one code over the other, they most likely supported the adoption of the Victorian rules given they were elected to executive positions at the same meeting at which the new rules were chosen.

The only available evidence suggesting a particular individual was an important figure in the adoption of the Victorian rules is that relating to Bateman. It is likely that he was, indeed, the driving force for change at the Fremantle club. As for Harry Herbert, he did not even claim he was involved in the Fremantle club’s decision when interviewed by The West Australian in 1947, though he did confess to having a “very hazy memory”. Instead, he claimed responsibility for helping to introduce the code to Western Australia, which he almost certainly did, at the Swan Football Club in 1883.

THE PERTH ROVERS

The Perth Rovers’ decision to play under the Victorian rules in 1885 was somewhat more complex, in that the club did not actually vote to adopt the Victorian rules at all. On 27 April 1885 – the same night on which the Fremantle club voted to play under the Victorian rules – the Perth Rovers Football Club held its general meeting at the United Service Hotel in the city. The only report of that meeting is contained in the April 29 edition of The Morning Herald and the key section reads: “The Secretary was requested to write to the other Football Clubs, and ascertain under what rules they intended to play, and it was determined to play under those rules which were adopted by the majority of the other clubs.” On a simple reading of

---

149 Western Australia Death Certificate for John Joseph O’Connell, Registration Number 1600190T/1914, died 28 September 1814, obtained from the Department of Births, Deaths and Marriages.
151 “Football Club”, The Morning Herald, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
this report, it would appear the Rovers’ decision was to be made for them by the other clubs. There must, however, have been some significant lobbying of the club before this meeting for such a decision to be made. The Perth Rovers were the unofficial champions of 1883, playing under the Rugby Union rules, and were unchallenged in 1884. While the lack of opponents in 1884 must have been disheartening, the club was largely made up of former High School students, who would only have played under the Rugby Union rules while at school.\textsuperscript{152} The club had also determined at their general meetings of 1882 and 1883 to play under the Rugby Union rules. No debate about these decisions was reported.\textsuperscript{153}

Assuming there were advocates for the Victorian rules among the members of the Perth Rovers, the next task is to identify them. This is not something upon which any previous historian has been able to shed any light, and almost all have ignored the importance of the decision by the Perth Rovers. There is, however, one important piece of eye-witness evidence that appears to hold the key, and it is contained within a little-known newspaper from the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century called the \textit{W.A. Sportsman}. In one instalment of a weekly series called “The Old Brigade” are the reminiscences of Charles Augustus Saw, who played football under the Rugby Union rules with both the Perth Rovers and the High School in the game’s earliest days in Western Australia. He is described in the article as having been “one of the finest rugbyites in Perth”.\textsuperscript{154}

But the Rugbyites were not destined to have matters football entirely in their own hands, for about this time Charlie Bishop (brother of Ted Bishop who figured so prominently in the cricket world here for many years – he “threw” a good ball, we remember) began to work hard to introduce the Australian game – then known as the “Victorian” game, because Victorian rules were adopted. In the face of much opposition Bishop was successful in converting the Rovers to the new code, and in 1885 the first Perth team to play the Australian game was formed. \textsuperscript{155}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{152} “The Old Brigade”, \textit{W.A. Sportsman}, 9 July 1915, p. 2.  
\textsuperscript{153} “Football Club”, \textit{The Inquirer and Commercial News}, 3 May 1882, p. 5; “General News”, \textit{The Inquirer and Commercial News}, 2 May 1883, p. 3.  
\textsuperscript{154} “The Old Brigade”, \textit{W.A. Sportsman}, 9 July 1915, p. 2.  
\textsuperscript{155} “The Old Brigade”, \textit{W.A. Sportsman}, 9 July 1915, p. 2.}
Charles Bishop’s name is not one that has before, nor since, been mentioned in connection with the pioneers of the Victorian rules in Western Australia. Nevertheless, this article provides more information about Bishop’s efforts to force a change at the Perth Rovers than any previous historian has provided to support the claims that Bateman was behind the Fremantle club’s decision.

There is little that can be done to test Saw’s claim, which was made some 30 years after the event and must be considered in light of the well-documented problems with the reliability of memory in an oral history context. Bishop’s own background provides little that would sway opinion either way. He was born in 1855 in Canada and there is no evidence he travelled to the other states of Australia and saw football played under the Victorian rules before the Perth Rovers meeting of 1885. His death certificate states he never lived in another state of Australia. An analysis of all match reports for games played under the Rugby Union rules before 1885 shows Bishop played for the Perth Rovers under those rules in both 1883 and 1884. Meanwhile, an analysis of all match reports from the first six seasons of football under the Victorian rules shows that Bishop apparently played just three games for the Perth Rovers, which would seem strange for a man who supposedly drove the decision to adopt the new rules. This can perhaps be explained by reference to his age. Bishop turned 30 in 1885 and may have felt that the new game, which promoted more kicking and running, had passed him by.

It is, of course, unlikely Bishop could have secured such a result on his own. As Saw pointed out, Bishop had been successful “in the face of much opposition” so he must have had some help. Unfortunately, the report of the general meeting is the only primary material concerning the decision taken by the Perth Rovers, other than a newspaper report a week later in which the Rovers stated that “all play should be

---

158 “The Late Mr. Charles Bishop”, The West Australian, 1 August 1936, p. 15.
159 “The Old Brigade”, W.A. Sportsman, 9 July 1915, p. 2.
under the Victorian rules in future”. A brief examination of the lives of the committee members indicates some of them likely backed Bishop, but at least one probably wanted to stick with the Rugby Union rules.

The first of the men named in The Morning Herald report as having been appointed to the club’s executive in 1885 is Frank Ernest Leopold Stafford, who was club captain the previous year and was widely considered the best footballer in the colony. Though Bob Messenger labelled Stafford an “advocate” for the Victorian rules, there is no evidence to suggest this was the case. Messenger may have assumed Stafford supported the Victorian game because he took the chair for the first meeting of the new Victorian rules administrative body, the W.A. Football Association, but it is more likely Stafford would have supported the retention of the Rugby Union rules. There are several reasons for this. The most important of these is that Stafford had been the best player under the Rugby Union rules during the three seasons in which it had been played in Perth. Such was the esteem in which he was held that he was appointed captain of the inaugural Fremantle team in 1882 and, upon his employment being transferred to Perth in 1883, he was immediately appointed captain of rival club, Perth Rovers.

The report of the annual meeting of 1885 also provides some suggestion that Stafford supported the Rugby Union rules. The only contentious decision reported to have been taken at this meeting was that the club voted to “play under those rules which were adopted by the majority of the other clubs”. It was also at this meeting that Stafford stepped down as club captain and, when asked to reconsider, he refused to do so. No reason for Stafford’s decision was reported by The Morning Herald, but I would argue this move is evidence that Stafford did not agree with the decision to abandon the Rugby Union rules. Further, Frederick Charles Monger then

---

160 “News and Notes”, The West Australian, 5 May 1885, p. 3.
164 “Football Club”, The Morning Herald, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
nominated Stafford for the new position of club president, which Stafford accepted. Thus, he rejected an on-field role that would have relied on his ability to lead players under the new rules, but accepted a more ceremonial position that did not require any experience with the new code. The identity of the man who nominated him for the president’s position is also important. Monger was a 22-year-old who had played football under the Victorian rules while attending Wesley College in Melbourne and likely supported the adoption of those rules by the Perth Rovers. His move to nominate Stafford as club president may have been akin to the offering of an olive branch to the vanquished. Though Stafford later moved to Bunbury and became involved in football administration with the Bunbury Football Club, which played under the Victorian rules, he also became heavily involved in early attempts to get Rugby Union football underway in the South-West. In all likelihood, Stafford was not an advocate for the adoption of the Victorian rules at all.

Given they were elected to on-field positions at the same meeting at which the Rugby Union rules were virtually abandoned, both the incoming captain and vice-captain must be considered likely supporters of the new Victorian rules. The captain, Lambert Pearson Ogborne, proved to be one of the best players in the new competition and continued playing football under the Victorian rules for the Perth Rovers until 1894, when he would have been 30-years-old. Vice-captain William Horace Draper Glyde also continued playing football under the Victorian rules through until the end of 1891 and died from consumption in 1892. Monger, who has already been discussed, was appointed a vice-president, along with George Thomas Strickland. Again, Strickland was voted into the position at the meeting at which advocates of the Victorian rules won the day. He continued as vice-president in both the 1886 and 1887 seasons, but was only reported to have played

169 “Football Club”, The Morning Herald, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
170 “Football Club”, The Morning Herald, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
a handful of games under the Victorian rules, all of them in 1885. He had previously played for the Perth Rovers under the Rugby Union rules in both 1883 and 1884. Secretary Vernon Knight and committee men James Rose and Walter Hartwell James were all graduates of the High School and may have been supporters of the Rugby Union rules. All three had played for the Perth Rovers under the Rugby Union rules. Knight apparently never played a game under the Victorian rules, but James and Rose each played three seasons in the new competition. The committee members at Perth Rovers were therefore not necessarily in agreement over the choice of code in 1885. The man most likely to have supported Bishop’s efforts to have the club adopt the Victorian rules was Monger, while Stafford was just as likely fighting for the retention of the Rugby Union rules.

Though it has not been recognised during the ensuing 130 years, save for the reference in the W.A. Sportsman in 1915, Charles Bishop deserves credit for convincing the Perth Rovers to make a decision that eventually saw the club play under the Victorian rules. This decision was not, however, an emphatic one. At the time it was made, only the Fremantle club had voted to play under the Victorian rules. Other clubs, including the Fremantle Unions, the defunct Perth team, and the High School could all have decided to play the 1885 season under the Rugby Union rules. If they had, the Perth Rovers may not have adopted the Victorian rules that season.

**THE VICTORIANS**

The third club to decide to play under the Victorian rules was the aptly named Victorians Football Club, which came into being on May 2 – less than a week after

---


175 “Sporting”, *The West Australian*, 4 June 1887, p. 3; “Sporting”, *The West Australian*, 14 September 1888, p. 3.
both the Perth Rovers and Fremantle clubs had held their all-important meetings.\textsuperscript{176} The situation with the Victorians was different in that the club was founded with the intention of playing under the Victorian rules. This much was evident in the advertisement in \textit{The West Australian} which called for interested parties to attend the club’s first meeting: “TO FOOTBALLERS. GENTLEMEN willing to assist in the formation of a FOOTBALL CLUB to play under Victorian Rules are requested to attend a MEETING to be held at CHIPPER'S HOTEL, on WEDNESDAY, 29th April, at 8pm.”\textsuperscript{177} The meeting was adjourned until the Saturday because of a poor turnout, at which time the Victorians Football Club was officially formed by about 40 members.\textsuperscript{178} Both Barker and Messenger claim it was Hugh Robert Dixson who placed the advertisement in \textit{The West Australian}, although neither provides evidence for such a claim.\textsuperscript{179} Errington, meanwhile, writes that Dixson “and his friends” arranged the meeting.\textsuperscript{180}

The press report of that meeting is the main piece of primary evidence concerning the identities of those who founded the club. “Mr. H. E. Rankin was elected captain, Mr. H. S. Haussen vice-captain, Mr. J. C. H. James president, and Mr. Dixson secretary of the club, Messrs. Longson and Lake forming the other members of the committee.”\textsuperscript{181} A brief examination of the lives of those mentioned shows that all except John Charles Horsey James were from South Australia, where the Victorian rules had proliferated in the 1870s.\textsuperscript{182} Given Dixson has been named as one of the most important West Australian football pioneers by several historians, it is appropriate to begin with him. Dixson arrived in Perth in 1884 from Adelaide to work for the engineering firm of J.W. Wright & Co, which had just completed its contract to extend the colony’s railway. Previously, he had attended Scotch College in Melbourne and Prince Alfred College in Adelaide, both of which played football under the Victorian rules.\textsuperscript{183} He left Western Australia in 1885, whereupon \textit{The

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{176} Errington, “Chasing Leather and Choosing a Code”, p. 73.
\textsuperscript{177} “To Footballers”, \textit{The West Australian}, 28 April 1885, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{178} “News and Notes”, \textit{The West Australian}, 1 May 1885, p. 3; “New Football Club”, \textit{The West Australian}, 5 May 1885, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{179} Barker, \textit{Behind The Play}, p. 5; Messenger, “The Fourteenth Foot”, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{180} Errington, “Chasing Leather and Choosing a Code”, p. 72.
\textsuperscript{181} “New Football Club”, \textit{The West Australian}, 5 May 1885, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{182} Blainey, \textit{A Game of Our Own}, pp. 79-83.
\textsuperscript{183} Errington, “Chasing Leather and Choosing a Code”, p. 72.
\end{footnotesize}
West Australian journalist “Spex” was effusive in his praise of Dixson, crediting him with “initiating” the Victorians club, founding the W.A. Football Association and “so persistently urging the superiority of the Victorian rules”.

Dixson returned to W.A. in 1891 and was elected president of the association. He was also instrumental in improving the state of Victorian rules football in New South Wales after he again left W.A.

The “Mr H.E. Rankin” referred to by the newspaper was Alexander George Rankin, a South Australian who played with North Adelaide Football Club in 1883. He arrived in Perth in 1884, playing with the Victorians in 1885 and 1886 before returning to South Australia and continuing his football career there. The same can be said of Henry Spencer Haussen, who also came from Adelaide and played for South Park in the S.A. Football Association competition in 1883.

Charles Darcy Longson and Abram Alex Lake both came to Perth in the years before the adoption of the Victorian rules. Longson arrived from Adelaide in 1884 to take up a job as the accountant for the W.A. Timber Co. He received his schooling at John L. Young’s Adelaide Educational Institution and then at Whisham College, in North Adelaide. He was the first secretary of the W.A. Stock Exchange. Lake arrived in Perth from South Australia much earlier, about 1877. Also an accountant, he travelled regularly to the eastern colonies.

The odd man out is John Charles Horsey James, who was a magistrate and was born in Rome. Educated at the Rugby School and later at Oxford, he would have been familiar with football, though it would certainly have been played under the Rugby Union rules. Barker also claims James helped to revive the Rugby Union game at the High School in 1881, but he was never reported to have played football under

185 “Football”, The Evening Star, 6 March 1912, p. 4.
186 Greg Wardell-Johnson to author, email, 29 July 2015.
191 “Death of Mr. J.C.H. James”, The Western Mail, 10 February 1899, p. 12.
the Rugby Union rules between 1882 and 1884.\textsuperscript{192} His reason for supporting this new Victorian rules club is something of a mystery.

One man not mentioned in the report of the first meeting of the Victorians Football Club is Arthur Courthope Gull, who learnt to play football under the Victorian rules while being educated at Hawthorn Grammar School in Melbourne. Gull played for the Victorians in 1885 and, during an interview with \textit{The Western Mail} in 1947, he claimed Dixson was responsible for forming the Victorians. He said he and Dixson had attended school together in Victoria and, when they ran into each in Perth, Dixson had asked him to help form a football club to play under the Victorian rules. Gull had agreed and they had “got a 20 together, calling ourselves the Vics”.\textsuperscript{193} While there is little reason to doubt Gull’s claim regarding Dixson, it must again be considered in light of the accepted problems with memory in oral history. This is especially the case given some of Gull’s other claims in the same article are not substantiated by the contemporary newspaper reports of 1885.\textsuperscript{194} Nevertheless, Gull’s comments strengthen Dixson’s claim to having been the founder of the Victorians.

It seems likely that Dixson was the leading figure in the formation of the Victorians, probably supported by Rankin. Haussen, Lake, Longson and Gull may also have been involved. This accords entirely with the memory of Charles Augustus Saw, who provided some detail about the Victorians in the \textit{W.A. Sportsman} article in 1915. “It was but a short time after the ‘Rovers’ conversion that Alex Rankin and Hugh Dixon (of Dixon’s Tobacco fame) convened a meeting that was held in a room where is now the front bar of the Criterion Hotel … The result of the meeting was the ‘formation’ of the Victorian team.”\textsuperscript{195} It also accords with the more recent recollections of Gull and the near-contemporaneous reporting of the journalist, Spex.

\textsuperscript{192} Barker, \textit{Behind The Play}, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{193} “Sports Diary”, \textit{The Western Mail}, 26 June 1947, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{194} See Gull’s claim that Fremantle Football Club was formed after an exhibition match was played between the Perth Rovers and the Victorians.
\textsuperscript{195} “The Old Brigade”, \textit{W.A. Sportsman}, 9 July 1915, p. 2.
THE HIGH SCHOOL’S QUANDARY

The last club to join the W.A. Football Association was the High School, which had been responsible for re-introducing Rugby Union football to Western Australia when it embarked upon a series of games against teams organised by the townsfolk of Perth in 1881. A ready explanation for the timing of football’s resurrection can be found in the arrival, in about March 1881, of new headmaster Thomas Breame Beuttler from England. Educated at the Rugby School, it is likely he was a strong advocate for the Rugby Union rules and he organised the High School team to play matches under those rules until it joined the W.A. Football Association in 1885.

Given its Rugby Union tradition, there appears to be only one explanation for the High School’s decision to switch to the Victorian rules in 1885 and become a foundation member of the W.A.F.A. – necessity. With the exception of the Fremantle Unions junior club, whose position in 1885 is unclear, all other active teams switched to the Victorian rules before the W.A. Football Association was formed on 8 May 1885. The High School faced the prospect of being left without regular opposition if they stuck with the Rugby Union rules.

An analysis of games played in the years between 1882 and 1884, which can be found at Appendix 2, shows that the High School’s most regular opponent was the Perth Rovers, probably due to simple geographical proximity. The High School was based in George St. in the city during this period and the Rovers played their matches at the new Recreation Ground, in the city. The High School had also played matches against the other Perth team, but that club had folded in 1883. Obviously, Fremantle and the Fremantle Unions played their matches at the port, which was a long train ride away. During the three seasons of club football played before the adoption of the Victorian rules, the High School was reported to have played just one match against a Fremantle team and never travelled to Fremantle.

198 “Football”, The West Australian, 13 May 1885, p. 3.
199 Edgar, From Slate to Cyberspace, pp. 46-47.
for a game. Beuttler may have considered the possibility of playing only against the Fremantle Unions in future too difficult, especially given the travel involved.

The Perth Rovers’ decision was crucial so far as the High School was concerned. The *West Australian’s* report of the meeting at which the W.A. Football Association was formed is the only primary evidence about the High School’s decision to join the association and, as a result, play under the Victorian rules. It provides little detail about the reasons for the decision. “The Secretary read a letter from Mr. Beuttler of the High School, saying, that, although unable to attend the meeting that night, he would be happy to join the Association.”²⁰⁰ The use of the word “happy” in that report may have been something of an overstatement. The High School played just one game under the Victorian rules, in which it was beaten by a Victorians team which only fielded half the required players, and promptly left the competition.²⁰¹

The analysis of the separate decisions made by Fremantle, the Perth Rovers, the Victorians and the High School to play football under the Victorian rules in 1885 indicates there was something of a snowball effect. Bateman’s efforts at the Fremantle club finally paid dividends because of a general disillusionment with football as it had been played under the Rugby Union rules in 1884. The Fremantle club’s decision likely made the Perth Rovers think twice about going on with rugby and the formation of the Victorians forced the Rovers to finally make the change. Once Fremantle, the Perth Rovers and the Victorians were all playing under the Victorian rules, the High School had little choice but to join them. Bateman, then, was probably the first to push for the Victorian rules, but the work done by Charles Bishop at the Perth Rovers and the strategic timing of Hugh Dixson’s move to form the Victorians were no less important. The involvement of Harry Herbert, meanwhile, appears to have been somewhat overstated.

²⁰⁰ “Football”, *The West Australian*, 13 May 1885, p. 3.
²⁰¹ “Sporting”, *The West Australian*, 23 June 1885, p. 3.
CHAPTER 3
HOW DID INTERCOLONIAL MIGRATION AND CLASS AFFECT THE DEBATE?

While previous historians have at least considered the poor state of football in W.A. and the lobbying efforts of key figures when examining the adoption of the Victorian rules in 1885, two other possible drivers have received little serious consideration. The first of these is migration. As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, many previous historians have cited migration as a factor in the events of 1885 without providing any real evidence to back their claims. In this chapter, I will argue that migration from the eastern colonies was an important factor in the move towards the Victorian rules. This was not, however, because a swathe of migrants landed in Perth and their numbers suddenly constituted an unbeatable voting bloc in favour of the game they knew at home. Rather, it was because of the decision by a group of South Australians to form a new club – the Victorians – at a time when the battle between the Victorian rules and the Rugby Union rules was on a knife’s edge. The second driver of change that has received insufficient attention is social class. Previous analysis of the role class played in the decisions of 1885 has been restricted to broad arguments about social control theory. In this chapter, I will argue the homogeneity of the members at both the Fremantle and Perth Rovers clubs was a significant factor weighing against the adoption of the Victorian rules in the years before 1885. The upper classes stalled the efforts of Victorian rules advocates to introduce the new code until the Fremantle club virtually collapsed in 1884, allowing the Victorian rules advocates at that club to finally push through the change. This started a chain reaction that forced the Perth Rovers to alter their position, before the formation of the Victorians Football Club finally settled the issue. I will also argue that social class was an important factor in the formation of the Victorians.

To provide a proper evidentiary basis for my arguments, this chapter will employ a prosopographical methodology, requiring an examination of the lives of each 1885 footballer to determine whether they spent any time in the other Australian

colonies prior to the adoption of the Victorian rules. It will also evaluate how they fit into the social structure of Western Australia. This analysis will show very few members of the Perth Rovers and Fremantle clubs spent significant time in the eastern colonies before 1885. There was, however, a significant number of South Australian migrants at the Victorians club. The prosopographical study will also show that the members of the Fremantle and Perth Rovers clubs were largely from the middle and upper classes and were connected through business, marriage and other social institutions. The members of the new Victorians Football Club, however, were from a wider cross section of the community and included working class men, both from Western Australia and the eastern colonies. For ease of reference, each club member’s details has been presented in tabulated form, while brief biographies of the players are included in the appendices.

FREMANTLE

It seems appropriate to start this examination with the Fremantle club because it was first to adopt the Victorian rules and its decision would likely have emboldened the Victorian rules advocates at the other clubs. Across the various newspaper reports that covered the six games played by Fremantle in the first W.A. Football Association season of 1885, a total of 23 players are named. The reports usually identify the men by surname only, but a newspaper report published in 1914 provides further information that allows for the full identification of all but four of those 23 men. These four mystery men are included in the table below, but their details have been underlined and italicised. Two of Fremantle’s 1885 committee members failed to take the field that season and have also been included in the table below. Their names have been marked with an asterisk.

---

203 “News and Notes”, *The West Australian*, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
204 Compiled from articles published in *The West Australian*, *The Daily News*, *The Herald*, *The Inquirer and Commercial News* and *The Morning Herald* during 1885.
205 “The Old Brigade”, *W.A. Sportsman*, 17 July 1914, p. 6.
206 “News and Notes”, *The West Australian*, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SURNAME</th>
<th>FIRST NAMES</th>
<th>DATE OF BIRTH</th>
<th>PLACE OF BIRTH</th>
<th>STATE OR COUNTRY OF BIRTH</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>AGE IN 1885</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALBERT *</td>
<td>Henry William</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Butcher (1885)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BATEMAN</td>
<td>William Augustus (Bill)</td>
<td>11/9/1866</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Merchant (1890)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROOMHALL</td>
<td>Richard Hooper</td>
<td>8/5/1867</td>
<td>Albany</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Ship’s engineer (1893)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROWN</td>
<td>William (Bill)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROWN</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUTEFISCH</td>
<td>William Theodor</td>
<td>2/8/1862</td>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>S.A.</td>
<td>Storekeeper (1888)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLARKE</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORDHAM</td>
<td>Ernest Albert</td>
<td>Jul.-Sep. 1863</td>
<td>Oxford, Oxfordshire</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Customs Officer (1885)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GALLOP</td>
<td>George Frederick (Fred)</td>
<td>2/6/1862</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Mercantile Clerk (1885)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANHAM</td>
<td>Francis Gabriel (Charles)</td>
<td>5/10/1857</td>
<td>Bunbury</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Clerk (1885)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HENDERSON</td>
<td>Francis (Frank)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HERBERT</td>
<td>Henry Albert</td>
<td>1865</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Government Clerk (1884)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOOPER *</td>
<td>William Henry Courtois</td>
<td>About 1861</td>
<td>Probably Bendigo</td>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>Jeweller (1885)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUMBLE *</td>
<td>John Alfred Ernest</td>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Bank Clerk (1885)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOSE</td>
<td>David Samuel</td>
<td>25/3/1858</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Storekeeper and Customs Officer (1889-90)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUKES</td>
<td>Frederick William Scott</td>
<td>4/7/1861</td>
<td>Sheffield, Yorkshire</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Clerk (1885)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKNIGHT</td>
<td>Patrick</td>
<td>Nov.1859</td>
<td>Toodyay</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Telegraphist (1885)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOORE</td>
<td>George Frederick</td>
<td>15/12/1865</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Merchant (1885)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEWMAN</td>
<td>Aubrey Woodward</td>
<td>15/7/1866</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Accountant (1888)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O’CONNELL</td>
<td>John Joseph</td>
<td>About 1857</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>W.A. Manager of Singer Sewing Machines (1885)</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAYNE</td>
<td>William Arthur</td>
<td>July.-Sep. 1863</td>
<td>Chatham, Kent</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Bank Clerk (1885)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RODRIGUES (ROGERS)</td>
<td>Daniel Joseph</td>
<td>16/2/1867</td>
<td>Auckland</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Furniture Broker (1889)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table shows that seven of the 21 known players and committee men at the Fremantle Football Club in 1885 were born in Fremantle, two were born in Perth, and three in rural Western Australia. Brief biographies of all known members of the Fremantle Football Club in 1885 can be found at Appendix 3, which show that only four of those who were born in W.A. are known to have spent time outside of the colony before 1885. Vice-captain Henry Albert spent a few weeks in Victoria before the 1881 football season got underway and George Moore received some military training in England.\(^{207}\) Neither of those players’ trips could be considered sufficient to have given them a preference for the Victorian rules. The same cannot be said of the other two men – Bill Bateman and Harry Herbert, both of whom played football under the Victorian rules at school in Adelaide.\(^{208}\) Their experience in South Australia was an important factor in determining their own preferences and, as discussed in the previous chapter, in Bateman’s move to push for the introduction of the Victorian rules at the Fremantle club.

Of those players born outside of Western Australia, five were born in England, but only Frederick Loukes is known to have spent considerable time there.\(^{209}\) None of those five men are known to have spent time in other states of Australia. The other four men born outside of Western Australia could all have had some experience with the Victorian rules before 1885. Daniel Rogers came to Perth from New Zealand, but spent some time in Melbourne before heading west; William Butefisch arrived directly from South Australia in 1884; Francis Ross came from Tasmania and


\(^{208}\) See “Monday, April 16, 1883”, *The Daily News*, 16 April 1883, p. 3; “General News”, *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 18 April 1883, p. 3.

William Hooper was brought up in Bendigo, on the Victorian goldfields.\textsuperscript{210} The Victorian code was dominant in each of these places.\textsuperscript{211} I would argue, however, that the code of football preferred by two of those players is unclear. Hooper joined the Fremantle Football Club when it was first formed in 1882, playing under the Rugby Union rules during that season and then umpiring games during 1883.\textsuperscript{212} An analysis of newspaper match reports for all games played by Fremantle before 1890 shows that he never played a game under the Victorian rules and was not re-appointed to the committee in 1886 or 1887.\textsuperscript{213} There is no evidence his involvement with the club stretched beyond the end of 1885 and it is entirely likely he preferred the Rugby Union rules. Meanwhile, a man named Rogers played football under the Rugby Union rules for the Fremantle Unions club (a junior club) in 1884 and, though no first name was reported in the press, this was likely Daniel Rogers.\textsuperscript{214} Rogers was also not reported to have made any further appearances for the Fremantle team after 1885. Given he was raised in New Zealand, where the Rugby Union rules were preferred, he may not have enjoyed playing football under the Victorian rules.\textsuperscript{215} As a result, of those born outside W.A., only Butefisch and Ross could be considered likely supporters of the Victorian rules because of their experiences in the other Australian colonies.

Overall, the backgrounds of 21 of the 25 players and administrators named by the press as being involved at the Fremantle club in 1885 have been identified. By tracing the lives of each of those 21 men, it is clear that migration could have played some role in that club’s decision to adopt the Victorian rules in 1885. It was a major factor in Bill Bateman’s decision to push for the adoption of the Victorian rules and


\textsuperscript{211} Blainey, A Game of Our Own, pp. 24-31 and 76-84.


\textsuperscript{213} “Football Notes”, The Western Mail, 15 May 1886, p. 13; “Sporting”, The West Australian, 22 April 1887, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{214} “Monday, July 7, 1884”, The Daily News, 7 July 1884, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{215} Blainey, A Game of Our Own, p. 81.
Herbert would likely have voted for the Victorian rules, though he does not appear to have taken an active role in pushing for change. There were, however, only two other club members whose experience outside of Western Australia makes them likely supporters of the new code. This extra support would have proved invaluable for Bateman, but it was nowhere near enough. A significant number of the locally born players, and those born in England, must have been won over to the new code for it to be adopted at the Rovers’ meeting of 1885.

Turning to issues of class and connections, the evidence clearly supports Roy Stanley’s argument that sport was the domain of the elite of society before the 1890s. “The lower classes had their own pastimes, but little time to enjoy them,” Stanley wrote.216 The Fremantle team was made up almost entirely of clerks, merchants and salesmen in 1885 – the comfortable upper and middle classes. Previous historians, including Stannage and Stoddart, have argued that sport was used as a method of control by the ruling classes in Western Australia.217 Barker suggests that the ruling elite was keen for the Victorian rules to be chosen because it was the most entertaining code and football’s survival was seen as important in providing a “social safety valve” that would keep the city’s lower classes away from the public houses, billiard rooms and brothels.218 There is certainly some evidence in contemporary newspaper reports to support this theory. The gentry-controlled newspapers consistently supported the adoption of the Victorian rules over the Rugby Union rules. For instance, when the newspapers reported in 1883 that the new Swan Football Club intended to play under the Victorian rules, The West Australian editorialised that it would be “advisable if the other clubs followed its example” and a few weeks later The Daily News also said it was a “pity” Western Australia’s footballers would not adopt the Victorian rules.219 There was, however, no article in which the footballers were explicitly urged to adopt the Victorian rules for reasons of social cohesion.

---

216 Stanley, A Spot So Eligible For Settlement, p. ii.
218 Barker, Behind the Play, pp. 66-69.
While issues of social class may have weighed against the retention of the Rugby Union rules when considered in relation to social control, there is just as strong an argument that issues of class weighed against the adoption of the Victorian rules in the period between 1882 and 1884. Given the population of Western Australia was only 35,000 in 1885, 15,000 of whom were women, it is hardly surprising that Fremantle’s footballers should also have known each other through their schooling, work, religion or other interests. For instance, the biographies at Appendix 3 show that at least six of the 20 men who have been identified as members of the Fremantle Football Club in 1885 were educated at the Fremantle Boys School and a further four were sent to the High School. At least three were members of the Fremantle Rifle Volunteers. Perhaps the biggest common link was the Fremantle Cricket Club. During the 1884-85 cricket season, 11 of the 21 Fremantle Football Club members who have been identified were also members of the Fremantle Cricket Club. These men also married women from the same social class, thereby shoring up their own social status. For instance, Hooper married the daughter of Fremantle Mayor Daniel Congdon, Moore married the daughter of Samuel Hamersley M.L.C. and Bateman married the daughter of a grazier who had inherited land in the Murray district. Some even married into their team-mates’ families. Richard Broomhall married Bateman’s sister, while Loukes and George Gallop each married one of the Ranford sisters; Gallop married another Ranford sister when his first wife died. Such deep connections between the club’s members ensured the Fremantle Football Club was a largely homogenous and insular group.

Research psychologist Irving Janis first identified “groupthink” in 1972 as being a “mode of thinking people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members strivings for unanimity override their motivation to

221 State Records Office of Western Australia: Consignment No. 4661, Fremantle Boys School, Admission Registers, 1858-1875; Edgar, *From Slate to Cyberspace*, pp. 395-474.
223 Fremantle Cricket Club Ledger. Held in the private collection of Robert Moore. 1884-1885 Season.
realistically appraise alternative courses of action”. Janis found groupthink was often observable when groups were cohesive, insulated and homogenous, leading to close-mindedness and pressure toward uniformity. Group members usually suppressed personal doubts and sought to silence dissenters. The Fremantle Football Club had all the hallmarks of a cohesive, insulated and homogenous group that would have had great difficulty in supporting new ideas, including the adoption of the Victorian rules. Bateman, as a likely disserter, would have been silenced by the other members in 1883 and 1884. In this way, social class and connections proved a barrier for the club’s small group of Victorian rules enthusiasts to overcome before 1885. By the beginning of that season, however, the situation had changed. The Fremantle club was not reported to have played a single match against another club during 1884 and must have been considered defunct or, at the very least, dormant. In the wake of the disappointing 1884 season, Bateman was able to round up enough support to pick up the pieces of the old club, perhaps with the assistance of Herbert, Butefisch and Ross, and move it towards the Victorian rules. Even then, there was an “animated discussion” between the members before the Rugby Union rules were finally dispensed with.

THE PERTH ROVERS

An examination of both the playing and non-playing members of the Perth Rovers Football Club can be conducted in the same manner, to determine whether migration or issues of social class and connections played a role in that club’s decision. The newspaper reports covering the Perth Rovers’ 1885 fixtures allow for a more complete identification of the men who took the field for that team because more players were named. In total, 29 players were named in newspaper reports as having worn the club’s amber-and-black jumper in 1885. There was also one committee man who did not take the field for the club. Of those 30 club members, only three were unable to be completely identified. The table below

---

228 “News and Notes”, *The West Australian*, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
230 “Football Club”, *The Morning Herald*, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
shows the names of all 30 men. The details of those who could not be identified have been underlined and italicised, while the non-playing committee man has been marked with an asterisk.

**TABLE SHOWING THE KNOWN MEMBERS OF THE PERTH ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB IN 1885**

* Denotes a non-playing committee member

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SURNAME</th>
<th>FIRST NAMES</th>
<th>D.O.B</th>
<th>PLACE OF BIRTH</th>
<th>STATE OR COUNTRY OF BIRTH</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>AGE IN 1885</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANGOVE</td>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Clunes</td>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>Second Clerk, Treasury Department (1886)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIRCH</td>
<td>Arthur Edmund (Dick)</td>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Draftsman (1903)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIRCH</td>
<td>Charles Vernon (<em>Knox</em>)</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Chemist (1889)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BISHOP</td>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td></td>
<td>Government Printing Office (1886)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPORN</td>
<td>Daniel Plant</td>
<td>8/5/1865</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Assistant Lithographer Government Printers (1884)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHIPPER</td>
<td>Stephen James</td>
<td>30/12/1863</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Law Student (1885)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLARK</strong></td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLYDE</td>
<td>Adolphus Yeovil (Dolph)</td>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Clerk, Tittles Office (1885)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLYDE</td>
<td>Francis Hallett</td>
<td>15/8/1862</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Merchant, Glyde &amp; Sons (1885)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLYDE</td>
<td>William Horace Draper (Horace)</td>
<td>19/8/1859</td>
<td>Probably Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Merchant, Glyde &amp; Sons (1885)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRUNDY</td>
<td>George</td>
<td>29/6/1862</td>
<td>York</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Telegraphist and Clerk (1885)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARKNESS</td>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>18/2/1866</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>S.A.</td>
<td>Shop Assistant (1884)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUSSEY</td>
<td>Percival Leitch</td>
<td>17/7/1869</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Third Clerk, Audit Department (1886)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAMES</td>
<td>Walter Hartwell</td>
<td>29/3/1863</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Associate to the Chief Justice of W.A. (1886)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNIGHT *</td>
<td>Vernon Godfrey</td>
<td>16/5/1868</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Clerk, Colonial Secretary's Office (1885)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGSFORD</td>
<td>Joseph Wood</td>
<td>29/7/1865</td>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>S.A.</td>
<td>Accountant Clerk, AMP Society (1885)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAWRENCE</td>
<td>Walter</td>
<td>1865</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Fisheries Inspector (1936)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEECH/LEITCH</td>
<td>Edward Alfred (Ned)</td>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Clerk, Telegraph Department (1886)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table shows that the Perth Rovers had even fewer migrants from the eastern colonies among their members than the Fremantle club. More than half the members were born at Perth and another four were born in rural W.A. Brief biographies of all known members of the Perth Rovers Football Club in 1885 can be found at Appendix 4. The biographies show that, of the 20 members who were born in Western Australia, few were known to have spent time outside of the colony before 1885. Dolph Glyde was educated in England, while his brother Francis visited the eastern colonies before the 1884 football season got underway. Charles Birch may have seen games played under the Victorian rules when he visited South Australia during the second half of 1884. Only Frederick Monger, who played under the Victorian rules during his schooling at Melbourne’s Wesley College, is likely to have had any significant experience with the new code before 1885.

231 “Mr. A. Glyde Dead”, The West Australian, 30 April 1951, p. 3; Erickson, The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians, pp. 1215-1216.
233 “Friday, June 14, 1878”, The Argus, 14 June 1878, p. 4.
Of the players born outside of Western Australia, three were born in England, none of whom is known to have spent time in the other Australian colonies before 1885. The other three men born outside of Western Australia could all have had some experience with the Victorian rules in the eastern colonies before 1885. Thomas Angove arrived in the colony in 1879, aged about 16, from Clunes, on the Victorian goldfields. Thomas Harkness was 20 when he arrived in Western Australia from South Australia in 1883, while Joseph Langsford was 19 when he arrived from South Australia the following year. Langsford was schooled at Prince Alfred College, which has been identified as one of the cradles of the Australian game, so there is little doubt he was familiar with the Victorian rules before arriving in Perth. Angove and Harkness, however, had each played football under the Rugby Union rules for the Perth Rovers during the previous seasons and may not have had a particular preference for the rules used in their home state.

Having examined the backgrounds of 27 of the 30 known members of the Perth Rovers club in 1885, it becomes clear that migration could only have been a very minor factor in the position the Rovers took at their 1885 annual meeting. At this meeting, the Rovers did not vote to play under the Rugby Union rules. Instead, they voted to play under the rules chosen by the majority of other clubs, leaving open the possibility they would play under the Rugby Union rules. It is very likely they changed their position because they had some information that the members of the Fremantle club, which was meeting on the same night, were split over which rules to adopt for the 1885 season. As discussed in the previous chapter, Charles Bishop was lobbying for change at the Perth Rovers and he could certainly have been supported by some of the interstate migrants, especially the likes of Joseph Langsford and Frederick Monger. But the small number of men who had

238 “Football Club”, *The Morning Herald*, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
experienced football under the Victorian rules in the other colonies makes it unlikely that migration was a significant factor in the Perth Rovers’ decision.

It is no surprise that the Perth Rovers were the least inclined to abandon the Rugby Union rules; the Rovers were an even more insular and homogenous group than the Fremantle Football Club. As the biographies at Appendix 4 show, the Perth Rovers members were also almost exclusively clerks and merchants. Some of the wealthiest and best-connected families in Western Australia were represented, including the sons of two members of the Legislative Council. Perhaps the best indication of the social class of the average Rovers member is that there were seven High School graduates among them. Frank Crowley described the attitude instilled in the students of the High School during the nineteenth century as being “a heady compound of social snobbery, laissez-faire capitalism, sentimental royalism, patriotic Anglicanism, benevolent imperialism and racial superiority”. The sons of the colony’s leading families were educated at the High School, including the key men who dominated public life in W.A. during the 1880s and 1890s. The Perth Rovers club was, even more than the Fremantle club, made up of the middle and upper classes.

The Rovers members were also men who knew each other from their school days, worked together or shared other pastimes. For instance, four of them worked at the Telegraph Department, while at least six were members of the Metropolitan Rifle Volunteers during the mid-1880s. Again, cricket was a big link. At least 12 of the Perth Rovers played for the Perth Cricket Club during the mid-1880s, while five played for the Metropolitan Cricket Club. The marriage ties were not so prevalent at the Rovers, although Charles Birch married the sister of team-mate Walter Lawrence and most of the players married the daughters of clerks or those who held positions at a similar level in private industry. One player married the sister of Fremantle footballer John Humble. Others were related more closely. Arthur

---

239 Edgar, From Slate to Cyberspace, pp. 395-474.
241 Crowley, Big John Forrest, pp. 4-5.
and Charles Birch were cousins, the three Glyde boys were brothers and Walter James’s mother married Samuel Randell’s father after both lost their first spouses.244 The Rovers members also relied on their team-mates in other areas of life. For instance, Thomas Harkness ended up working as an accountant at Monger’s stores.245 In 1897, Walter James was the lawyer for team-mate Stephen Chipper in a Supreme Court civil dispute.246 When Charles Bishop was charged with taking and damaging another man’s boat without his permission in 1886, former Perth Rover George Parker represented him.247 Parker was also the lawyer for Charles Birch when he was charged with manslaughter in 1889 and for the family of Frank Stafford during an inquest into Stafford’s death in 1910.248

In 1882, 1883 and 1884, such insularity and homogeneity would have weighed heavily against the introduction of the Victorian rules, especially given Frank Stafford was the club’s leader and was likely an advocate for the Rugby Union rules.249 Further, Barker argued that the Rugby Union rules had survived during this period because “those who dominated the colony’s political, legal and even educational life remained strongly British in connections and attitudes”.250 The Rovers’ British-style schooling, British connections and attitudes and their long connection with the British Rugby Union rules would have made it difficult for them to even consider the new Victorian rules. As a result, even after a disastrous 1884 season in which the Rovers had not been able to play a single club match because of the lack of a suitable opponent, the club members could not bring themselves to abandon the Rugby Union rules in 1885. The best Bishop’s lobbying was able to achieve was a decision that the club would adopt the rules chosen by the majority

247 “Perth Police Court”, The West Australian, 8 January 1886, p. 3.
249 “Football Club”, The Morning Herald, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
250 Barker, Behind the Play, p.5.
of the other clubs. At this stage, the only other clubs were the Fremantle Football Club and the Fremantle Unions Football Club. The Fremantle Unions was a juniors club, a label which indicated the level of their play rather than the age of the players. Though Fremantle Football Club adopted the Victorian rules, the Perth Rovers could easily have stuck with the Rugby Union rules, especially if the Fremantle Unions had also done so. The formation of the Victorians Football Club completely altered this balance.

**THE VICTORIANS**

The Victorians Football Club’s decision to play under the Victorian rules was made under altogether different circumstances to the decisions made by the Fremantle and Perth Rovers clubs. As discussed in the previous chapter, it was only ever intended that this club should play under the Victorian rules. That much was made clear in the newspaper advertisement that called interested parties to a meeting for the purposes of forming the club. Subsequent newspaper articles about that meeting reported that the Victorians Football Club was so named because the members intended to play under the Victorian rules and “because most of the members hailed from the neighbouring colonies”. While there was some influence exerted upon the Fremantle club by migrants from the east, and very little on the Perth Rovers, migration from the eastern colonies was obviously a major factor in both the formation of the Victorians and the founders’ decision to play under the Victorian rules. An analysis of those involved with the club shows there was indeed a significant number of migrants from the eastern colonies, particularly South Australia, among the members in 1885.

Unfortunately, identifying all the members of the Victorians Football Club in 1885 is made impossible by the fact that, unlike for Fremantle and Perth Rovers, there was no article in 1914 in which their identities were made clear. Of the 34 players who were named in the press as having taken the field for the Victorians in 1885, only 21

---

252 “To Footballers”, *The West Australian*, 28 April 1885, p. 2.
253 “New Football Club”, *The West Australian*, 5 May 1885, p. 3.
can be completely identified.\textsuperscript{254} The table below shows the details of all 34 playing members and the lone non-playing member of the Victorians Football Club’s 1885 committee.\textsuperscript{255} Those who could not be completely identified have been italicised and underlined. According to a newspaper report of the club’s first meeting, several other men were elected to the positions of patron and vice-president in absentia.\textsuperscript{256} It is clear from the report that these men had little to do with the formation of the club or its decision to play under the Victorian rules and were chosen only to hold ceremonial positions. As a result, they are not included on the table below and their backgrounds will not be discussed.

\textbf{TABLE SHOWING THE KNOWN MEMBERS OF THE VICTORIANS FOOTBALL CLUB IN 1885}

\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|l|l|l|}
\hline
SURNAME & FIRST NAMES & D.O.B. & PLACE OF BIRTH & STATE OR COUNTRY OF BIRTH & OCCUPATION & AGE IN 1885 \\
\hline
\hline
ARMSTRONG & N. & Unknown & Unknown & Unknown & Unknown & \\
\hline
ASHWELL & J. & Unknown & Unknown & Unknown & Unknown & \\
\hline
BROWN & M. & Unknown & Unknown & Unknown & Unknown & \\
\hline
CARMICHAEL & James & 1861 & Reedy Creek & Victoria & Butcher (1889) & 24 \\
\hline
CLARK & S.S. & Unknown & Unknown & Unknown & Unknown & \\
\hline
COOMER & Michael (Mick) & 22/1/1863 & Fremantle & W.A. & Farmer (1892) & 22 \\
\hline
CROSSLAND & Charles Morton & 1858 & Adelaide & Victoria & Business Manager (1886) & 27 \\
\hline
DIXSON & Hugh Robert & 11/11/1865 & South Lead & N.S.W. & & 20 \\
\hline
DRUMMOND & Unknown & Unknown & Unknown & Unknown & & \\
\hline
FLINDELL & Francis Richard & 28/11/1863 & India & Aerated Water and Cordial Manufacturer (1885) & 22 \\
\hline
GAMSON & Henry & 1861 & Ararat & Victoria & Draper (1887) & 24 \\
\hline
GULL & Arthur Courthope & 1/1/1867 & Guildford & W.A. & Bank Clerk (1886) & 18 \\
\hline
HARDY & Joseph Charles & 29/1/1863 & Clarendon & S.A. & Carpenter (1903) & 22 \\
\hline
HAUSSEN & Henry Spencer & 3/9/1865 & Adelaide & S.A. & Commission Agent (1892) & 20 \\
\hline
HEALY & Patrick John & 1864 & Probably Perth & W.A. & Bootmaker (1886) & 21 \\
\hline
HORNABROOK & George Soward & 13/11/1863 & Adelaide & S.A. & Pearler (1890) & 22 \\
\hline
JAMES * & John Charles Horsey & 30/8/1841 & Rome & Italy & Commissioner of Land Titles & 24 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

* Denotes a non-playing committee member

\textsuperscript{254} Compiled from articles published in \textit{The West Australian}, \textit{The Daily News}, \textit{The Herald}, \textit{The Inquirer and Commercial News} and \textit{The Morning Herald} during 1885.

\textsuperscript{255} “New Football Club”, \textit{The West Australian}, 5 May 1885, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{256} “New Football Club”, \textit{The West Australian}, 5 May 1885, p. 3.
Of the 22 men who have been identified in the table above, 19 were born in Australia. Seven of those men were born in South Australia, three in Victoria and one in New South Wales, meaning intercolonial migrants outnumbered those born in Western Australia. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Victorians club was likely formed by Hugh Dixson, possibly with the help of Alexander Rankin. These two men were both members of the inaugural Victorians Football Club committee, along with fellow South Australians Charles Longson and Abram Lake. The only other man on the committee was the Italian-born, English-raised John James. This was clearly a club devised by intercolonial migrants.

Though migration was an important factor in the formation of the Victorians Football Club, there were also other important factors that helped bring the club into existence. Brief biographies of all known members of the Victorians Football Club in 1885 can be found at Appendix 5. They show that, just as was the case at the Fremantle and Rovers clubs, many members of the Victorians were also connected through cricket. No less than seven of the club’s 1885 members also played for the

---

257 “New Football Club”, *The West Australian*, 5 May 1885, p. 3.
Union Cricket Club, including South Australians Rankin and Lake. It is very likely that Rankin and Lake convinced the other five to try football by joining the Victorians in 1885, especially given those five were all West Australians and could easily have joined the Perth Rovers in the preceding years if they had truly been interested in the game. Dixson, meanwhile, played for the rival Metropolitan Cricket Club, along with many of the Perth Rovers footballers. It is interesting to note that he decided to form a new club to play football under the Victorian rules, rather than joining his cricket team-mates at the Rovers and then attempting to change that club from within. It is very likely Dixson talked about the future of football in Western Australia with those cricketers during the summer of 1884-85. The formation of the Victorians may, then, have been planned by Dixson and some of those cricketers in order to place further pressure on the Perth Rovers to switch codes.

Other than the cricketing links, the Victorians Football Club was far less homogenous than the other two clubs. While the Fremantle and Perth Rovers members were almost all clerks and merchants, the Victorians had a bootmaker, a baker, a wheelwright, a draper and three carpenters. There was good reason for this: there were not enough South Australians to form a new football club on their own. As a result, the founders relied on a newspaper advertisement to attract the rest of the players they required to get the club off the ground. Such an advertisement, which called only for footballers who were interested in playing under the Victorian rules, would have appealed to players who had already played under those rules in the eastern colonies. It would also have attracted West Australians who did not want to play with the Rovers. In both cases, this included working class men. For example, James Carmichael, a butcher, and Henry Gamson, a draper, were both from country Victoria and joined the Victorians in 1885. They were certainly more working class than most of the footballers at the Perth Rovers and Fremantle clubs, but could have experienced football in Victoria because the

---

258 “Perth v Union C.C.”, *The West Australian*, 21 January 1885, p. 3.
game there was somewhat more egalitarian from the 1870s. Meanwhile, bootmaker and unionist Patrick Healy, carpenter Richard Ward and baker Thomas Marshall also joined the Victorians. All were born in W.A. and could have played for the Perth Rovers before 1885, but likely felt they did not fit in with the bankers and clerks at that club.

What this examination has shown is that migration from the eastern colonies played some role in the decision made by the Fremantle club to adopt the Victorian rules in 1885, most notably through the schooling of Bill Bateman in Adelaide. It was only a minor factor in the Rovers’ decision to play under the rules adopted by the majority of other clubs. But the formation of the Victorians club, which was largely made up of intercolonial migrants, effectively forced the Rovers to adopt the Victorian rules or face another season of football without an opponent. Migration, therefore, was important in forcing the change. Social position and networks, meanwhile, played a similar role. At Fremantle, it appears to have weighed against the Victorian rules until the club collapsed in 1884. It was only after the club was resuscitated by Bill Bateman and his supporters that the Victorian rules were finally adopted, and even then it was only after some debate among the club’s members.

At the Rovers, many of the players had already been brought together during their schooling at the High School. While at school, they played only under the Rugby Union rules. This long-standing familiarity with the British code, along with the British attitudes instilled in them while at the High School and the club’s homogeneity and insularity, was likely responsible for the Rovers’ reluctance to abandon the British game. Finally, at the Victorians Football Club, there were not enough South Australian and Victorian migrants to form a team. A handful of

---

262 Blainey, A Game of Our Own, p. 51.
working class West Australians came to the rescue, most likely because they were attracted to a new club that did not exclusively cater for the middle and upper classes. Migration and social class were, therefore, extremely important in ensuring the 1885 football season was played under the Victorian rules.
During the 1860s and 1870s, as the hard work of Western Australia’s settlers began to afford them more leisure time, football fever caught hold. Football, at the time, was not a single, universal game. Rather, it was the term used to describe any game which involved the kicking of a ball. The most popular of these games were codified; the rules of the game we now know as rugby union were first written down and agreed upon in 1845, Australian football followed suit in 1859, and the game now known in Australia as soccer was first codified in 1863.\(^{264}\)

In Western Australia, the first-known organised games were played between the townsfolk and a visiting army regiment in 1868, most likely under rugby-style rules.\(^{265}\) Every subsequent game reported by the press until the end of 1884 also appears to have been played under rugby-style rules, the most notable of them coming after the High School, which had many Rugby School links, organised several games in 1881 that reignited interest in the game.\(^{266}\)

In 1882, five new clubs were formed in Perth and Fremantle and, despite the popularity of the Victorian rules in most of the other states, the Rugby Union rules were adopted by those that survived the first winter. It appeared the British code had won the battle for supremacy on the western side of the continent.\(^{267}\) There were good reasons for the clubs to adopt the Rugby Union rules at this point. Many of the players and organisers, especially at the dominant Perth Rovers club, had only ever played under those rules during their schooling at the High School.\(^{268}\) Others were likely familiar with the Rugby Union rules from their time growing up or being schooled in England, including the likes of Ernest Shenton, Dolph Glyde and Samuel Randell.\(^{269}\) The social class, shared connections and networks of the clubs’ members were instrumental in maintaining this position for

\(^{266}\) Errington, “Chasing Leather and Choosing a Code”, p. 66.  
\(^{267}\) Errington, “Chasing Leather and Choosing a Code”, p. 68.  
\(^{268}\) “The Old Brigade”, W.A. Sportsman, 9 July 1915, p. 2.  
\(^{269}\) “Obituary. Mr Ernest C. Shenton”, The Western Mail, 9 October 1909; p. 41; “Mr. A. Glyde Dead”, The West Australian, 30 April 1951, p. 3; Erickson, The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians, Vol 4 R-Z, pp. 2572-2573.
the first few years. It ensured the membership at each club was a largely homogenous and insular group, leading to a situation in which consensus was always preferred and dissenters silenced.

The drivers for change came from several directions. The first was that the players seemed to have simply tired of the British code. The Perth club folded in 1883, while the Fremantle club did not play any matches in 1884 and was, for all intents and purposes, defunct. The press coverage did not always help the game, either. The newspapers of the day presented a picture of football as a rough sport, in which players were regularly injured.\textsuperscript{270} The reporters also regularly commented on the way in which many players struggled to come to grips with the rules and disputed umpiring decisions.\textsuperscript{271} Then there was the incorrect, but persistent, claim that Western Australia was the only state likely to continue with the Rugby Union rules, thereby ruling it out of any future intercolonial competition.\textsuperscript{272} Perhaps most importantly, there was no central body to organise fixtures and to resolve disputes.\textsuperscript{273}

The abandonment of the Rugby Union rules was almost inevitable by the end of 1884 and those agitating for change were pushing the new Victorian rules. During the period from 1882 to early 1885, the Victorian rules were championed by members of the press and those who wrote letters to the papers.\textsuperscript{274} And when the rugby game was at its weakest, after the relatively barren season of 1884, those who supported the Rugby Union rules finally gave in. They must have taken some solace in the fact that, at that stage, there were far fewer differences between the two games than there are today. In fact, they would have appeared almost identical to an onlooker who was not well versed in the finer points of each.\textsuperscript{275} It was not just the general play that appeared the same. Many of the rules of the Victorian code were themselves identical, some in the wording and others in practice. For instance, the grounds were the same and the balls were the same,

\textsuperscript{270} See “News in Brief”, \textit{The Inquirer and Commercial News}, July 19 1882, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{271} See “Occasional Notes”, \textit{The West Australian}, June 20 1882, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{272} See “Friday, May 4, 1883”, \textit{The Daily News}, May 4 1883, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{273} Macintyre, “The ‘Bouncing Game’ in Fremantle”, p. 132.
\textsuperscript{274} See “Friday, May 4, 1883”, \textit{The Daily News}, 4 May 1883, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{275} Barker, \textit{Behind the Play}, p. 10.
both games started with a kick-off from the centre while each team’s players were in their own half, both allowed a player to take a mark when catching the ball directly from the boot of another player and both forced players to drop the ball when tackled. Games were also decided by goals only, not tries (in the Rugby Union game) or behinds (the Victorian game).  

It seemed that all that was needed was for a few key figures to take up the cudgels for the Victorian rules. Given few West Australians were likely to have seen a game played under the Victorian rules, such lobbyists were not easy to find. At Fremantle, local lad Bill Bateman had played under the Victorian rules while at school in Adelaide and had been trying to introduce it to the locals since he was involved in the formation of the short-lived Victorian rules-playing Swan Football Club in 1883. While there was an “animated discussion” about the rules to be used in games played by Fremantle at its general meeting of 1885, resistance to those who were pushing the Victorian rules had waned. Convincing the Perth Rovers, most of whom had British attitudes and connections and had been brought up on the Rugby Union rules while playing at the High School, was a different proposition altogether. But lobbying from Canadian-born Charles Bishop eventually succeeded in having the Rovers adopt the same rules as those chosen by the majority of the other clubs. Clearly, the Rovers must have known Fremantle was poised to make the change, leaving them without any senior opponents for yet another season. Further, they may well have known that another club was about to be formed and intended playing under the Victorian rules. By voting to follow the majority of other clubs, rather than voting in favour of the Victorian rules, the Rovers gave themselves an “out”. If the other clubs did not switch, nor would they.

Perhaps the key to the entire switch was, therefore, the formation of the Victorians Football Club, which was largely due to a group of South Australians. While there

278 “News and Notes”, *The West Australian*, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
280 “Football Club”, *The Morning Herald*, 29 April 1885, p. 3.
was one South Australian at each of the Perth Rovers and Fremantle clubs, there were at least seven at the Victorians in 1885. Chief among them was Hugh Dixson, who was the club’s first secretary and was also involved in the formation of the controlling body, the W.A. Football Association. Other South Australians to join the Victorians included Alexander Rankin, Joseph Anderson, Joseph Hardy, Henry Haussen, George Hornabrook, Abram Lake, and Charles Longson. This was not, however, enough for a team. To attract enough members to form the club, the organisers were forced to advertise in the local newspapers and the advertisement made it clear that this club would only ever play under the Victorian rules. As a result, several working-class West Australians and a couple of working-class Victorians joined the club, perhaps drawn by the lure of a football club that was not controlled by the establishment.

The arrival of the Victorians tipped the balance in favour of the Victorian rules. When the Fremantle club was dormant in 1884, the Perth Rovers seemed content to continue playing among themselves under the Rugby Union rules, occasionally playing a match against the High School. Even after Fremantle voted to switch to the Victorian rules in 1885, the Rovers could have stuck with the Rugby Union rules and left Fremantle to play games amongst themselves. The Rovers, meanwhile, still had the High School as potential opponents and would have hoped the Fremantle Unions junior club would soon improve sufficiently to challenge them. Their position would have been no worse than in 1884. With the advent of the Victorians, however, Fremantle and the Victorians could play against each other in the first match between two senior clubs since 1883. Interest in the Rovers was likely to fall away quickly if the new code proved successful. Thus, they had little choice but to join the new competition and switch codes, effectively dragging the High School along with them for the same reasons.

By the middle of 1885, the Victorian rules game was firmly entrenched in Western Australia. Though there were teething problems, many of them similar to those endured in the Rugby Union rules seasons of 1882, 1883 and 1884, the controlling

---

282 “To Footballers”, The West Australian, 28 April 1885, p. 2.
body quickly ironed out those that were most pressing. In the 130 years since the switch, Australian football, as it has come to be known, has only once come under an attack similar to that which saw it supplant rugby union in 1885. That came in 1905 when a cabal of schoolmasters decided to promote the British Association game in the schools, effectively taking from the Australian game the next generation of players. The W.A. Football Association eventually solved that problem, forming the heavily nationalist Young Australia Football League, which quickly grew into a hugely successful football competition for school children.\textsuperscript{283}

Today, football is the biggest participation sport in Western Australia, boasting 178,000 competitors at last count. There are 531 football clubs, 56 leagues, 390 football grounds and the two A.F.L. clubs boast a combined membership of well over 100,000 people.\textsuperscript{284} Without the slow evolution of the Victorian rules game, the efforts of a handful of key lobbyists, and the timely migration of young men from South Australia, those 178,000 people might be spending their weekends running in tries, instead of handballing it through the midfield and kicking goals on the run from outside the 50-metre arc.


### APPENDIX 1

TABLE SHOWING ALL FOOTBALL GAMES KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN PLAYED IN PERTH AND FREMANTLE 1868-1881

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Opponent</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14th Foot Regiment</td>
<td>5 Goals</td>
<td>14th Foot Regiment</td>
<td>High School Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>18 &amp; 26</td>
<td>Fri. &amp; Sat.</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14th Foot Regiment</td>
<td>2 Goals</td>
<td>14th Foot Regiment</td>
<td>High School Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>Metropolitan Rifle Volunteers</td>
<td>1 Goal</td>
<td>14th Foot Regiment</td>
<td>2 Goals</td>
<td>14th Foot Regiment</td>
<td>High School Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>Temperance Society</td>
<td>2 Goals</td>
<td>Fremantle Town</td>
<td>1 Goal</td>
<td>Temperance Society</td>
<td>Fremantle Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Mon.</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>1 Goal</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>Fremantle Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>Government Officials</td>
<td>3 Goals</td>
<td>Tradesmen</td>
<td>1 Goal</td>
<td>Government Officials</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>Perth Boys School</td>
<td>1 Goal</td>
<td>Fremantle Boys School</td>
<td>1 Goal</td>
<td>Draw</td>
<td>Fremantle Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>Mr Ord's Team</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Mr Lefroy's Team</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>High School Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>Mr Ord's Team</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Mr Lefroy's Team</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>High School Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>High School A-L Surnames</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>High School M-Z Surnames</td>
<td>2 Goals</td>
<td>High School M-Z</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2 Touch Downs</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>High School Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>1 Try &amp; 1 Goal</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Draw</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Draw</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### APPENDIX 2

**TABLE SHOWING ALL FOOTBALL GAMES KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN PLAYED IN PERTH AND FREMANTLE 1882-1884**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Team (1)</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Opponent (2)</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tue.</td>
<td>Government Officers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Outsiders</td>
<td>1 Goal and 3 Tries</td>
<td>Outsiders</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>Mr Hanham's Fremantle Team</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Mr Gallop's Fremantle Team</td>
<td>3 Goals and 3 Touches</td>
<td>Mr Gallop's Fremantle Team</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>2 Touch downs</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Thu.</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>1 Goal and 2 Touch downs</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>Barrack Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>W.A.-Born Players</td>
<td>5 Tries</td>
<td>Players Born Outside W.A.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>W.A.-Born Players</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Tue.</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>2 Goals</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>1 Goal and 1 Try</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>2 Goals and 2 Tries</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>1 Goal and 1 Touch down</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>2 Goals and 3 Tries</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>W.A.-Born Players</td>
<td>1 Try</td>
<td>Players Born Outside W.A.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>W.A.-Born Players</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Tue.</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>1 Touch down</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>3 Tries Goals, Civilians</td>
<td>1 Goal, 1 Try</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>1 Goal, 1 Touch down</td>
<td>Fremantle Civilians</td>
<td>1 goal, 5 Touch downs</td>
<td>Fremantle Civilians</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>1 Goal, 1 Try</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>Barrack Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>1 Try</td>
<td>Combined Perth and Perth Rovers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>Barrack Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tue.</td>
<td>Surnames A-L</td>
<td>1 Touch down</td>
<td>Surnames M-Z</td>
<td>1 Touch down</td>
<td>Draw</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Thur.</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>2 Touch downs</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Opponent</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Opponent</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883 June</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>3 Touch downs</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883 June</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>1 Goal, 2 Tries</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Esplanade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883 July</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Combined Perth and Perth Rovers</td>
<td>1 Try</td>
<td>Combined Perth and Perth Rovers</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883 July</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>1 Try</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>Barrack Green</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884 May</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Invitational Team</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Draw</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884 May</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>1 Goal, Several Touch downs</td>
<td>Perth Rovers</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884 June</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Fremantle Unions</td>
<td>2 Touch downs or 3 Tries</td>
<td>Fremantle Unions</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884 June</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884 June</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Frank Stafford’s Perth Rovers</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Ernest Shenton’s Perth Rovers</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Draw</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884 June</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Fremantle Unions</td>
<td>1 Goal and 2 Tries</td>
<td>Junior Perth</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Fremantle Unions</td>
<td>Barrack Green</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884 July</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Frank Stafford’s Team</td>
<td>2 Tries</td>
<td>Ernest Shenton’s Team</td>
<td>1 Try</td>
<td>Frank Stafford’s Team</td>
<td>Esplanade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX 3

BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES OF THE KNOWN MEMBERS OF THE FREMANTLE FOOTBALL CLUB IN 1885

Henry William Albert (1861-1889) The son of a convict who became a coach proprietor and butcher, Albert was born at Fremantle in 1861. He first attended school at York in about 1866, before transferring to the Fremantle Boys School in 1868. During the 1870s, he started his career as a butcher in his father’s business and married the daughter of a coachsmith at Perth in 1878. Albert travelled to Victoria for a few weeks before the football season of 1881 and joined the Fremantle club in 1882 to play football under the Rugby Union rules. He continued playing football until shortly before his untimely death at Fremantle from an unknown illness in 1889. He was also a member of the Fremantle Cricket Club and owned land at Cockburn.285

William Augustus Bateman (1866-1935) Bateman was the son of shipowner and merchant John Bateman and was born at Fremantle in 1866. He was schooled at the High School in 1878 and 1879, then travelled to Adelaide to complete his education. He returned a few years later and was instrumental in the formation of the first West Australian football club to play under the Victorian rules, in 1883. He also joined the Fremantle Football Club, playing with the club and its successors until 1894, and the Fremantle Cricket Club. Bateman first married the daughter of a grazier and, after her death, he married the niece of the three Glyde brothers who played football for the Perth Rovers. He eventually took over his father’s firm, expanding it into fish canning. He settled in the southern suburb of Bull Creek and died from prostate cancer at a private hospital in South Perth in 1935.286

Robert John Beswick (1864-1946) Beswick arrived with his parents and siblings from England in 1871, having been born at Surrey. His father was a pensioner guard. In 1876, the family moved to Willagee Swamp, east of Fremantle. Beswick was the Fremantle telegraph operator from 1883 and, later, the postmaster at various W.A. country towns. He was reported to have played with Fremantle in 1885 and 1886. He married the daughter of a carpenter and contractor who was sponsored to come to Australia from England. Beswick later settled in North Perth, where he was a member of the Loton Bowling Club. He died in 1946.  

Richard Hooper Broomhall (1867-1929) Born in Albany, Broomhall was the son of an architect, explorer and public works clerk. He was educated at the Fremantle Boys School from January 1875 and in 1885 married the sister of Fremantle captain and Victorian rules enthusiast William Augustus Bateman. At his death, in 1929, he was remembered as a marine engineer at Fremantle who also served on river craft and North-West steamers, though he had gone farming in the 1910s.  

William Theodor Butefisch (1862-c1917) Butefisch, a South Australian, arrived in Western Australia in October 1884 and was gone by March 1886. While there is no record that he played football in South Australia, Butefisch joined the Fremantle Football Club within just a few months of his arrival. During his time in W.A., he also founded the Fremantle Sailing Club. On his return to South Australia, he took up as Slate to Cyberspace, p. 399; “Monday, April 16, 1883”, The Daily News, 16 April 1883, p. 3; Fremantle Cricket Club Ledger. Held in the private collection of Robert Moore. 1884-1885; “Sporting Intelligence”, The Western Mail, 6 October 1894, p. 3; State Records Office of Western Australia, Consignment No. 3403, Files – Probate, 660 of 1935, William Augustus Bateman, Motion Paper and Death Certificate; “Death of Mr. W.A. Bateman”, The Western Mail, 1 August 1935, p. 10; Erickson, The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians, Vol. 1, A-C, pp. 160-162; Erickson, The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians, Vol. 2, D-J, pp. 1215-1216  


a store keeper, though he soon found himself in financial difficulty. He died sometime between 1916 and 1925 in South Australia.289

George Frederick Gallop (1862-1948) Although he was born at Perth, to a fruit and vegetable farmer in 1862, Gallop became a well-known member of the Fremantle community. He was even the captain of the Fremantle Boys School team that took on a Perth school team at football in 1876. He was only reported to have played for Fremantle during 1885. Gallop married the daughter of a tanner in 1886 and had children born at Fremantle through the 1890s and into the new century. Starting as a shipping agent and investor, he later worked in the Colonial Secretary’s Office and the Lands and Group Settlements Department. He was also a member of the Fremantle Cricket Club and lived to the age of 85, dying in 1948.290

Francis Gabriel Hanham (1857-1890) Hanham was born at Bunbury in 1857 and chose to go by the name of Charles, like his father before him. Throughout the 1860s, the Hanham family could be found living in Fremantle, where Charles Hanham Sr. was a sailmaker and the master of at least four ships. Charles Jr. was schooled, irregularly, at Fremantle Boys School from October 1863 through to at least January 1872. He then secured a job as a telegraph messenger at Fremantle in 1874 before becoming a clerk and, in 1886, a customs agent. As well as playing football for the Fremantle Football Club in 1882 and 1885, Hanham was a member of the Fremantle Cricket Club. He married at Fremantle in 1882, having children born there in 1884 and 1886, but died in 1890.291
Henry Albert Herbert (1865-1948) Herbert has long been credited, with Bateman, as having been responsible for the introduction of the Victorian rules to Western Australia. The son of a hotel keeper who employed ticket-of-leave men in his businesses at Rockingham, Fremantle and Guildford, Herbert was born at Fremantle and schooled in South Australia. On his return to Western Australia, he and Bateman were involved in the formation of the Swan Football Club in 1883 and Herbert continued playing for the Fremantle Football Club and its successor until a nasty on-field incident at the end of the 1888 season. He was also a member of the Fremantle Cricket Club. Herbert later became a government clerk and married the daughter of a carter, dying at Fremantle in 1948.292

William Hooper (c1861-1949) A jeweller by trade, Hooper was raised in Bendigo and, although there is no record of his birth, he was likely also born in the Victorian goldfields town. His father was a draper and lived in Bendigo his entire adult life, dying in 1890. Hooper arrived in W.A. in 1881 and immediately set up his Fremantle jewellery shop, which was advertised in The Herald later that year. At the time, he would have been about 20. He later married the daughter of Fremantle Mayor Daniel Congdon. Despite his upbringing on the Victorian Goldfields, which was one of the cradles of the Victorian rules game, Hooper played football for Fremantle under the Rugby Union rules in 1882 and umpired under those rules in 1883. He was also a member of the Fremantle Cricket Club and was one of the first people to ride a bicycle in Western Australia, leading him to become heavily involved in...
cycling. He continued as a jeweller into the new century before his sons took over the business. Hooper died in Perth in 1949.293

John Alfred Ernest Humble (1867-1912) Humble was born at Fremantle in 1867 and attended the Fremantle Boys School, where his father George Bland Humble was headmaster, from January 1875. He was just 18 and working as a bank clerk when the Victorian rules were adopted. He continued working at the National Bank until 1895, then formed his own business with team-mate William Payne. Humble eventually married the daughter of a Customs Department cooper. A long-time member of the Fremantle Rifle Volunteers, he was also heavily involved in lawn bowls. His death was caused by lung disease in 1912.294

David Samuel Jose (1858-1919) The son of a Fremantle grocer, Jose was born at the port in 1858 and educated at the Fremantle Boys School from August 1862. He married the daughter of a pensioner guard at Fremantle in 1879 and had nine children born there throughout the 1880s and 1890s. Jose started with Fremantle Football Club in about 1883 and continued through until the club folded at the end of 1886. He was also a member of the Fremantle Cricket Club. Though he started his working life in his father’s store, he spent most of it working for the Customs

Department. He later became a schoolmaster at Guildford and died, aged 61 after suffering a stroke in 1919.295

Frederick Scott Loukes (1861-1919) Arriving from Sheffield, England in about 1879, Loukes worked as a clerk at the port from about 1884. He is not reported to have played football with Fremantle Football Club until 1885, but continued playing under the Victorian rules with another Fremantle-based club after Fremantle Football Club’s demise. Eventually, Loukes became a business manager for teammate George Frederick Moore’s family firm. He never moved away from Western Australia, marrying the daughter of a tanner. She was the sister-in-law of teammate George Gallop. Loukes was at one-time a Fremantle Council member and was also involved with both the Fremantle Bowling Club and the Fremantle Cricket Club. He died of stomach cancer in 1919.296

Patrick McKnight (1859-1922) McKnight was born to a farming family at Toodyay in November 1859 and obtained employment as a telegraph messenger there in 1880. He was eventually transferred to Greenough as postmaster, then to Fremantle in 1883, Greenough in 1884 and then back to Fremantle. He joined the Fremantle Football Club in 1883 and continued playing under the Victorian rules after Fremantle Football Club folded in 1886. He was also a member of the Fremantle


Cricket Club. Though McKnight did travel to South Australia in 1887, he was a resident in W.A. his entire life and died after suffering a stroke at Perth in 1922.297

**George Frederick Moore (1865-1935)** When the first season of football under the Victorian rules got underway, George Moore was just 20. The son of a former M.L.C and prominent businessman who had shipping and pearling interests, Moore was born at Fremantle in 1865 and educated at the High School from 1878 to 1883. He then worked for his father’s firm. He was heavily involved with several Fremantle sporting and social clubs and is only known to have left W.A. to undertake some military training in England. He is only reported to have played for Fremantle Football Club during 1885. He later married the daughter of a pastoralist and eventually took over his father’s business empire, becoming heavily involved in several other businesses and community groups. He died after a short illness at Perth in 1935, aged 69.298

**Aubrey Woodward Newman (1866-1896)** Born at Fremantle in 1866, Newman was the son of former Fremantle M.L.C. Edward Newman and a half-brother to Fremantle Mayor Barrington Wood. He was schooled at the High School from 1881 to 1883 and then became an accountant. The earliest report of his involvement with the Fremantle club came in 1884, when it played under the Rugby Union rules. He is not reported to have played for the club after 1885. Newman never married and later became a surveyor, meeting his end while exploring the interior of W.A. in 1896.299

---


John Joseph O’Connell (c1857-1914) An Irishman who was born into a farming family in about 1857, O’Connell spent his first year in Australia living in Victoria. He came to Western Australia in about 1882 and was first reported to have played for the Fremantle Football Club in 1883. O’Connell finished his playing career at the end of the first season under the Victorian rules. The local agent for Singer Sewing Machines, O’Connell married the daughter of a storekeeper and accountant who arrived in the new colony in 1829. He fell out with his wife and abandoned his children in the 1890s, moving to Kalgoorlie to work on the mines. O’Connell died of hepatitis in 1914 at an old men’s home in Claremont.300

William Arthur Payne (1864-1924) Having been born at Chatham, in Kent, Payne arrived from England as a two-year-old in 1864 and lived the rest of his life in Western Australia. He worked as a schoolteacher at Fremantle in 1883 and as a bank clerk from 1884, marrying the daughter of a storekeeper and former Fremantle Town Councillor. He later started his own firm with team-mate John Humble and was involved with the Fremantle Rifle Volunteers. He was also a member of the Fremantle Cricket Club. Payne died from a kidney infection at home in East Fremantle in 1924.301

Daniel Joseph Rogers (Rodrigues) (1867-1939) Perhaps the most interesting of the Fremantle players, Rodrigues was born into a Jewish-Spanish family in Auckland in

---


1867. When the family travelled to Melbourne in 1882, they adopted the name Rogers and never relinquished it. Rodrigues’s father was an auctioneer in Perth and Daniel followed in his footsteps despite a near-death experience when he was accidentally shot in 1886. He is only reported to have played with Fremantle in 1885. Rogers later moved back to New Zealand and then settled in Sydney, finding himself in trouble with the law over a fraud in 1929. He died in 1939.302

Francis William Ross (1860-1944) The only Tasmanian identified as having played in the first W.A. season under the Victorian rules, Ross was born at Hobart in 1860 and arrived in Western Australia in 1883. He was a commercial traveller when he came to the colony, but soon started a jam factory and later manufactured biscuits in partnership with his brother. He was not reported to have played with Fremantle after 1885. Ross moved to Cranbrook to try his hand at farming in 1909 and eventually retired to Albany.303

Charles Augustus Saw (1865-1941) Saw was born at Perth in 1865, the son of one of Perth’s earliest merchants. He was educated at the High School from 1878-1880 and, soon after, joined the National Bank for a three-year stint. He is only reported to have played for the Fremantle Football Club during 1885. He set out to survey the Kimberley in 1886 and later spent time at both Southern Cross, where he opened the first bank branch in the area, and Yilgarn. He also started the coach firm Cobb & Co. Working as a sharebroker and mining agent on his return to Perth, Saw was elected to the Perth City Council in 1897. With a partner, he founded his own stockbroking firm in 1910 and became chairman of the Perth Stock Exchange. He

was also a member of the W.A. Turf Club Committee, the Fremantle Cricket Club and the Fremantle Rifle Volunteers. Saw died in 1941.\textsuperscript{304}

APPENDIX 4

BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES OF THE KNOWN MEMBERS OF THE PERTH ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB IN 1885

Thomas Angove (1863-1912) Born at Clunes, near Ballarat on the Victorian goldfields, Angove was the son of a surveyor and likely arrived in Western Australia with his family in 1879. He secured a position as a clerk in the Audit Department in 1880 and joined the Treasury Department in 1886, marrying the daughter of a bricklayer, mason and builder in 1894. He joined the Rovers in about 1884 and played through until 1886, also joining the Perth Cricket Club. Angove remained at the Treasury Department until shortly before his death from a stroke at Claremont in 1912. 305

Arthur Edmund Birch (1867-1925) The son of a butcher who was also the treasurer of the Perth Roads Board, Birch lived his entire life in Western Australia. In 1902, he married the daughter of a carpenter and builder who built part of the Pensioner Barracks. Birch was reported to have played with the Rovers until 1889. By the 1900s, he was working as a draftsman and he died at Subiaco in 1925. 306

Charles Vernon Birch (1863-1959) A cousin of Arthur Birch, Charles was the son of a grocer and lived with his family at Perth during the 1860s and 1870s. He attended


the High School in 1878 and 1879 and eventually became a chemist in the city. Known as “Knox” to his friends, Birch visited South Australia during the second half of 1884 and was also a member of the Perth Cricket Club. He joined the Rovers in 1882 and in 1886 married the sister of team-mate Walter Lawrence, whose father was an American-born shipwright. Birch continued with the Rovers until 1891. He died at the ripe old age of 96 in 1959.307

Charles Bishop (1855-1936) The man most responsible for the adoption of the Victorian rules at the Perth Rovers was born in Canada in 1855 and arrived in W.A. in about 1871. He worked for the Government Printing Office for 40 years, marrying the daughter of a labourer and warehouseman in 1881. Bishop started his football career with the Rovers about 1883 and turned to umpiring after he finished playing in 1885. He was also a foundation member of the W.A.C.A. and a member of the Perth Cricket Club. Bishop died at Perth in 1936.308

Daniel Plant Caporn (1865-1934) Caporn’s father was a Swan River ferryman and pilot for 32 years, having arrived in the colony in 1842. Caporn was first reported to have played for the Rovers in 1884, aged 19, while he was working for the Government Printing Office. He finished playing with the Rovers in 1885, but was also a member of the Perth Cricket Club and the Metropolitan Rifle Volunteers. Caporn married in 1886 and later joined the Land and Surveys Department, dying in Perth in 1934.309


Stephen James Chipper (1863-1933) Given the same name as his father, who was the licensee at the United Services Hotel, Chipper joined the Metropolitan Rifle Volunteers while still at the High School and was the starter and clerk of course at the W.A. Turf Club for more than 40 years. He played football under the Rugby Union rules for the Perth Rovers from 1882 to 1884 and was a law student when the Victorian rules were introduced in 1885. He played through to 1887. Chipper later married the sister of Fremantle footballer John Humble. He became clerk of the police courts and served in the Boer War, dying from heart disease at his East Perth home in 1933.  

Adolphus Yeovil Glyde (1864-1951) The youngest of the football-playing sons of merchant and M.L.C. George Glyde, “Dolph” lived in Perth with his parents during the 1860s and 1870s. He was then sent to England for his schooling and secured a job as a clerk at the Titles Office in 1882. As well as playing football in Perth from 1881 to 1886, he was a flag officer at the Royal Perth Yacht Club and a member of the Metropolitan Cricket Club. He married in 1905 and was appointed Registrar of Land Titles in 1918, retiring in 1924. Glyde died at home in West Perth in 1951.  

Francis Hallet Glyde (1862-1889) Francis Glyde also lived at his parents’ home in Perth through the 1860s and 1870s, but did not pursue a career in the public service. Instead, he joined his father’s merchant firm G. Glyde & Sons in 1879. He


played with the Rovers from 1882 and visited Victoria in 1884, though his trip took place outside the football season. He played just one season under the Victorian rules. Francis Glyde never married, dying at home in Perth in 1889 after suffering an illness.312

William Horace Draper Glyde (1859-1892) The oldest of the three football-playing Glyde brothers was known as Horace. Like his brother Francis, Horace Glyde joined the firm G. Glyde & Sons in 1879. He started playing football a year sooner than his brother, in 1881, and continued through to 1891. Horace Glyde also died young, succumbing to consumption at his father’s home in 1892. He never married.313

George Grundy (1862-1898) Another member of the Rovers who worked at the Telegraph Department, Grundy was born at York. During Grundy’s youth, his father worked at the Toodyay Convict Depot, later taking a position as an accountant in Perth and then turning to farming in the Canning district. Grundy married the daughter of a former Royal Navy officer who ran passenger and cargo services along the coast. Grundy was a member of the Metropolitan Rifle Volunteers and the Metropolitan Cricket Club. He joined the Rovers in 1882 and played through to 1886, dying in 1898 after being struck with typhoid fever while working as a field telegraphist at Diorite King, near Mt Leonora.314


**Thomas Harkness (1866-1927)** The son of a missionary, Harkness was born in 1863 in the South Australian town of Owen, about 80km north of Adelaide. He arrived in Western Australia in 1883, aged 20, and married the daughter of a publisher, joining the Fremantle Football Club that same year. He also found work in Fremantle, as a shop assistant. In 1884, Harkness joined the Rovers, playing through to 1887. By 1888, he was the accountant for Monger’s Stores in York. He later became the Fremantle branch manager for the Bank of New South Wales and continued working through to 1927 when he died in his office.315

**Percival Leitch Hussey (1869-1944)** Hussey lived first at Upper Swan and then at Perth, finishing his education at the High School in 1883 and joining the Perth Rovers in 1884, aged just 15. He was also a member of the Perth Cricket Club from an early age and represented the state at cricket. His football career finished in 1890. His father was a teacher at first, then a clerk in the Colonial Secretary’s Department before moving to the Treasury. Hussey married a woman from Broken Hill in 1896. He moved to Adelaide in the early 1900s and died there in 1944.316

**Walter Hartwell James (1863-1943)** The Premier of W.A. from 1902 to 1904, James was another of the Rovers’ High School alumni. He grew up in Perth, where his father ran the Freemasons Hotel, and joined the Perth Rovers in 1883, playing through to 1888. He was also a member of the Perth Cricket Club. James became Associate to the Chief Justice shortly after the Victorian rules were introduced and was admitted to the bar in 1888. His father was originally the Colonial Commissariat before becoming a publican, while his stepfather was also the father of team-mate Samuel Randell. James, who married a Welsh woman, died in Perth in 1943.317


Vernon Godfrey Knight (1868-?) Knight was born at Perth in 1868, the son of a civil service clerk, Weld Club member and Metropolitan Rifle Volunteers officer. He attended the High School from 1878 to 1883 before securing a position in the civil service and playing for the Perth Rovers in 1884. He was promoted to the position of clerk to the Registrar General in August 1885. He has proved difficult to trace much after this point.318

Joseph Wood Langsford (1865-1957) Having been born in South Australia and schooled at the Victorian rules-playing Prince Alfred College, Langsford was familiar with the game before arriving in Western Australia in late 1884, aged 19. He worked in W.A. as an accountant clerk with the AMP Society where his boss was George Fethers – the man who umpired the first game played under the Victorian rules. Langsford joined the Perth Rovers in 1885 and played with the club through to the end of the 1887 season. He also joined the Perth Cricket Club. In 1889, he married the daughter of a sawyer and gardener. Langsford later became Mayor of Claremont and then M.L.C. for Perth, dying in 1957.319

Walter Lawrence (1865-1926) Lawrence, who eventually became a fisheries inspector, was born in Perth in 1865, the son of an American-born shipwright. He joined the Rovers at least as early as 1883 and continued playing with the club to

---


1890, marrying in 1895. Lawrence’s death certificate records he spent his entire life in Western Australia, dying at Mandurah after suffering an intestinal obstruction in 1926.\footnote{State Records Office of Western Australia, Consignment No. 3403, Files – Probate, 216 of 1926, Walter Lawrence: Death Certificate; “Occasional Notes”, \textit{The West Australian}, 5 June 1883, p. 3; “General News”, \textit{The West Australian}, 23 May 1890, p. 5; Erickson, \textit{The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians}, Vol. 3, K-Q, p. 1814.}

**Edward Alfred Letch (1864-1952)** “Ned” Letch was another of the Perth-born Rovers to have attended the High School. The son of Guildford coach proprietor and mailrun contractor Alfred De Leech, he finished his education in 1882 and played with the Perth Rovers under the Rugby Union rules from 1882 to 1884. Letch continued playing under the Victorian rules until 1888 and was also a member of the Perth Cricket Club. He eventually joined the Telegraph Department and married the daughter of a grazier, dying at Clackline in 1952.\footnote{Searching WA Online Indexes \url{http://www.bdm.dotag.wa.gov.au/_apps/pioneersindex/}, Edward Alfred Leech, Birth Registration No. 8228 of 1864, accessed online 30 June 2015; “Football”, \textit{The Herald}, 10 June 1882, p. 2; “Sporting”, \textit{The West Australian}, 7 September 1888, p. 3; “Sporting”, \textit{The West Australian}, 30 May 1885, p. 5; “Deaths”, \textit{The West Australian}, 25 April 1952, p. 16; Erickson, \textit{The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians}, Vol. 3, K-Q, p. 1814; p. Erickson, \textit{The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians}, Vol. 4, R-Z, p. 3308.}

**Frederick Charles Monger (1863-1919)** Born at York in 1862, Monger was the son of a wealthy publican and merchant who arrived in Western Australia in the early 1830s. The Monger boys, who did not always get along, were set up with merchant businesses by their father. Frederick Monger was schooled at Wesley College in Melbourne and played football under the Victorian rules while there, returning to Western Australia in 1879. He joined the Rovers in 1882, playing football until 1888, and was also a member of the Metropolitan Cricket Club. Monger was involved in several other businesses and owned horses, eventually following in his father’s footsteps by becoming the M.L.A. for York. In 1903, he was declared bankrupt, but he eventually recovered financially and took a seat on the Perth Stock Exchange. He died of cancer in 1919.\footnote{“Friday, June 14, 1878”, \textit{The Argus}, 14 June 1878, p. 4; “Friday, August 11, 1882”, \textit{The Daily News}, 11 August 1882, p. 2; “Football”, \textit{The Western Mail}, 1 September 1888, p. 24; “Sporting”, \textit{The West Australian}, 21 April 1886, p. 3; Wendy Birman, “Monger, Frederick Charles (1863-1919)”, Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, \url{http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/monger-frederick-charles-7624/text13325}, accessed online 1}
Lambert Pearson Ogborne (1864-1912) One of the best players in the first season of football under the Victorian rules, Ogborne was born at Guildford in 1864. He was schooled at both the Perth Boys School and Fremantle Boys School, securing a job with the Telegraph Department in 1879. He continued with the civil service right through until his death at West Perth in 1912 from pneumonia. After retiring from football in the mid-1890s, he became a prominent lawn bowler. Ogborne was also a member of the Perth Cricket Club.  

Samuel Joseph Randell (1866-1942) Randell was born at Perth and educated in England from 1876-1882. He joined the Perth Rovers for the 1883 and 1884 football seasons, which were played under the Rugby Union rules, and continued playing under the Victorian rules into the 1890s. His family lived in Perth throughout his childhood, where his father, later both an M.L.C. and M.L.A., ran a regular Perth-Fremantle paddle steamer service. Randell was a government clerk and married the daughter of a shipping and railway agent. He was heavily involved with the congregational church as deacon and treasurer of his local parish and was also a member of the Perth Cricket Club. He died at home in West Perth in 1942.  

Edward John Rodoreda (1864-1928) The son of a Spanish Benedictine who left the brotherhood after arriving in Perth in 1849, Rodoreda worked in his father’s bakery before joining the Perth Rovers and playing through to 1886. He then secured work as a clerk in the post office and married in 1891. Although he went bankrupt in 1893, Rodoreda later reinvented himself as an auctioneer, valuer, and estate agent and achieved some prominence in this industry during the early 1900s. He was also


a member of the Perth Cricket Club. Rodoreda died in Melbourne after an operation in 1928.\textsuperscript{325}

\textbf{James Rose (1862-1943)} Rose was born in 1862 in Bunbury, where his father ran the Parkfield Estate farm until at least 1878. He was schooled at the High School in 1878 and 1879, joining the Perth Rovers in 1882 and playing with the club until 1887. Rose was a clerk of works in 1887 and later secured a position as a bank clerk, marrying the daughter of a civil service clerk in 1889. A member of the Metropolitan Cricket Club, Rose was also a decorated officer in the Metropolitan Rifle Volunteers and later became a Justice of the Peace. He died at Subiaco in 1943.\textsuperscript{326}

\textbf{Albert Edward Spencer (1867-1918)} Yet another of the Perth Rovers’ clerks, Spencer was born at Perth and raised in the city through the 1860s and 1870s. His father, who was also a clerk, sent him to the High School in 1882 and 1883 and he secured a position at the Lands Department soon thereafter. Spencer was first reported to have played with the Perth Rovers in 1884 and finished with the club in 1890, marrying a woman from Sydney that same year. He was also a member of the Perth Cricket Club. At the time of his death, which happened when he accidentally fell from a raised platform at his office in 1918, Spencer was the chief record clerk at the Lands Department.\textsuperscript{327}

\begin{flushright}


\textsuperscript{327} State Records Office of Western Australia, Consignment No. 3458, Applications for Grants of Letters of Administration, 166 of 1918, Albert Edward Spencer: Death Certificate; “Football”, \textit{The Herald}, 24 June 1882, p. 1; “Occasional Notes”, \textit{The West Australian}, 8 June 1883, p. 2; “Occasional Notes”, \textit{The West Australian}, 14 June 1884, p. 3; “Sporting”, \textit{The West Australian}, 24 July 1890, p. 3; “Sporting”, \textit{The West Australian}, 20 May 1886, p. 3; “Civil Servant Dies”, \textit{The Sunday Times}, 10 March 1918, p. 2; “News and Notes”, \textit{The West Australian}, 12 March 1918, p. 4; “The Death of Mr. A.E. Spencer”, \textit{The West Australian}, 16 March 1918, p. 8; Edgar, \textit{From Slate to Cyberspace}, p. 436 and 461; Erickson, \textit{The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians}, pp. 808, 1849, 2903 & 2905; Erickson, \textit{The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians}, p. 2903; Searching WA Online Indexes
\end{flushright}
Frank Ernest Leopold Stafford (1857-1910) The pre-eminent footballer under the Rugby Union rules, Stafford was born in Gloucestershire in 1857. He was a clerk at the W.A. Bank from 1879, joining the Fremantle Football Club in 1882 and the Perth Rovers in 1883 when he was transferred to the bank’s Perth branch. He continued with the Rovers until 1888, but played only a handful of games under the Victorian rules. He also played for the Metropolitan Cricket Club. Stafford married the daughter of the local Collector of Customs and spent several years in Bunbury, where he became heavily involved in football under both the Victorian rules and the Rugby Union rules. He continued working for the bank through until his death by suicide at the bank’s Midland Junction branch in 1910.328

George Thomas Strickland (1859-1947) Strickland’s family arrived in Perth in 1830 and his father ran both the Freemasons Hotel and the United Services Hotel for a total of 14 years during Strickland’s youth. The young Strickland eventually became a clerk in the Telegraph Department and married a pensioner guard’s daughter. He was also a member of the Metropolitan Rifle Volunteers. He was first reported to have played with the Perth Rovers in 1883, but only played one season under the Victorian rules. He remained with the Posts and Telegraph until his retirement and died at Margaret River in 1947, aged 88.329

Robert Wigglesworth (1866-1910) A draftsman by trade, Robert Wigglesworth was born in York, England in 1866 and arrived in W.A. in June 1884 with his father, who

was the new manager of the Perth Gas Company. The younger Wigglesworth immediately joined the public service to work in the Lands Department. He played for the Rovers from 1885 to 1888. By 1909, he was chief assistant to the department’s Under-Secretary. Wigglesworth, who was also a freemason, never lived outside of W.A. after his arrival from England. He married twice, both times to the daughter of a storekeeper, dying in 1910 from what was described as “brain fever”.

**Wilfred Faulkner Wilkinson (1867-1917)** Born in Hampshire, England in 1867, Wilkinson arrived in Perth with his family a year later. His father was the captain in an army regiment. During the 1860s and 1870s, the family farmed around Guildford and in the late 1870s at Toodyay. He joined the Rovers in about 1883, playing with the club until 1892, also playing cricket with the Metropolitan Cricket Club. Wilkinson became a clerk at the Union Bank and lived in Coolgardie for a time. He married in 1907 and died at Perth in 1917.

---


APPENDIX 5

BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES OF THE KNOWN MEMBERS OF THE VICTORIANS FOOTBALL CLUB IN 1885

Joseph George Anderson (1864-?) Something of a mystery man, Anderson was born in the suburbs of Adelaide in 1864. He arrived in Western Australia shortly before the 1885 football season and joined the Victorians, disappearing soon thereafter. Further details have proved impossible to trace.332

James Carmichael (1861-1902) Born in the Victorian town of Kilmore, about 60km north of Melbourne, Carmichael was the son of a stock agent. He set himself up as a butcher in Barrack St. during the 1880s, played with the Victorians in 1885 and 1886, and later moved to Cottesloe. Carmichael married the daughter of a hotel licensee and pastoralist in 1890 and was well known in local horse racing circles, dying in 1902. He was also a member of the Perth Cricket Club from about 1887.333

Michael Coomer (1863-1921) Educated at Fremantle Boys School, Coomer was the son of a member of the Imperial Forces who became a bootmaker in Perth. He was born at Fremantle, but later settled at Perth, where he was a member of the fire brigade. Coomer married the daughter of a Guildford police constable. A talented sportsman, he was keen on athletics, was a member of the Swan River Rowing Club and the Union Cricket Club and was also a member of the Metropolitan Rifle Volunteers. Coomer played football in the W.A.F.A. with the Victorians, then the Metropolitans and, finally, West Perth, finishing in 1891. He continued playing and umpiring football in the eastern districts thereafter. Coomer later owned horses and

ran a hotel at Northam before farming at Goomalling. He died at Wongan Hills in 1921.334

**Charles Morton Crossland (1858-1911)** Crossland was born in Adelaide, west of Bendigo, on the Victorian goldfields. He arrived in Western Australia in 1882, working as a government surveyor in the North-West before forming the firm of Morrison & Crossland in 1885 and surveying for the Midland Railway Company. He married the daughter of pastoralist and Bunbury magistrate Gerald Lefroy in 1886 and later joined with Alexander Forrest as a land agent. His football career appears to have lasted only two seasons. Crossland also surveyed some of the wheatbelt, dying after a stroke at Merredin in 1911.335

**Hugh Robert Dixson (1865-1940)** The son of an Adelaide and Melbourne tobacco manufacturer, Dixson was born near Forbes in New South Wales. He was educated at Scotch College in Melbourne, Prince Alfred College in Adelaide and then at the University College School in London, moving to W.A. in 1884 to work for J.W. Wright & Co. on the transcontinental railway. He only stayed a year, returning to Adelaide and his father’s business late in 1885. While in Perth, Dixson also played for the Metropolitan Cricket Club with some of the Rovers footballers. He returned to Perth in the 1890s, marrying at Fremantle, again returning to Adelaide for business reasons a few years later. He eventually changed his surname to Denison to avoid people confusing him with his uncle, who was also Hugh Dixson. Denison later...

---


\textbf{Arthur Courthope Gull (1867-1951)} Educated at the Hawthorn Grammar School in Melbourne, where he played football under the Victorian rules, Gull was the son of a merchant and M.L.C. He was born at Guildford in 1867 and, after his schooling, secured a position as a clerk at the Bank of New South Wales. He is only reported to have played one season for the Victorians, but was also a member of the Metropolitan Cricket Club. Gull married the daughter of a pastoralist with interests...
at both Guildford and Greenough. He later became a J.P. and something of an inventor, dying at home in Subiaco in 1951.\textsuperscript{339}

**Joseph Charles Hardy (1863-1918)** Hardy arrived in W.A. from Adelaide in 1884, on the same ship that brought team-mate Alexander Rankin to the colony. Future Victorians committee member John James was also on that ship. Born at Clarendon, in the Adelaide Hills, Hardy was a carpenter. He was reported to have played for three years in Perth, afterwards returning to South Australia, where he died in 1918.\textsuperscript{340}

**Henry Spencer Haussen (1865-1942)** Born in Adelaide in 1865, Haussen arrived in Perth sometime after the 1883 football season, which he played with South Park in the South Australian league. He attended the North Adelaide Grammar School and, after just a single season playing under the Victorian rules in Perth, he returned to Adelaide and took a job as a commission agent. Haussen later moved to Sydney, where he became a publican. He died at Wyong in country New South Wales in 1942.\textsuperscript{341}

**Patrick John Healy (1864-1955)** The son of a pensioner guard, Healy was a bootmaker and was involved with the Boot and Shoemakers’ Union. He was likely born at Perth in 1864, shortly after his parents arrived in W.A., and was also a


member of the Union Cricket Club until he joined the new I’Zingari Cricket Club in 1885-86. He married the daughter of a tenant farmer and died at Mt Lawley in 1955.342

George Soward Hornabrook (1863-1892) A mercantile clerk, Hornabrook was born in South Australia. He arrived in Western Australia about 1885 and likely went in search of gold because he was at Halls Creek in 1888, ran a hotel there in 1889, and died at Southern Cross after falling from his horse in 1892. He is only reported to have played for the Victorians in 1885.343

John Charles Horsey James (1841-1899) James was born in Rome and educated both at the famous Rugby School and at Oxford, starting work as a lawyer during the 1860s. He arrived in W.A. in 1875 to take a position as the colony’s first Commissioner of Land Titles. Along with his interest in the Victorians Football Club, he was also a steward with the W.A. Turf Club, played cricket with both the Perth and Metropolitan cricket clubs, helped form the W.A. Cricket Association and was a keen yachtsman. James, who also held several other judicial positions during his time in Perth, married the daughter of a former gaoler who became Registrar General. He died after a short illness in 1899.344

Abram Alex Lake (1861-1926) Born at Callington in South Australia, Lake went by the name Alexander, rather than Abram. An accountant, it is not known when he


arrived in W.A., though it has been suggested it could have been as early as 1877. While in Perth, he was also a member of the Union Cricket Club and then the I’Zingari Cricket Club. Lake played football with the Victorians until 1887, eventually returning to South Australia, where he died in 1926.345

**Charles Darcy Longson (1858-1916)** Born in 1858 in the Adelaide beachside suburb of Glenelg, Longson arrived from South Australia in 1884 to take up a job as the accountant for the W.A. Timber Co. He received his schooling at John L. Young’s Adelaide Educational Institution and then at Whisham College, in North Adelaide. He was the first secretary of the W.A. Stock Exchange, following in the footsteps of his father, who worked for Adelaide’s Royal Exchange. He was chairman of Western Australia’s Sanitary Commission and visited the Kimberley Goldfields in 1886, later floating the Perth Gas Company and becoming involved with the totalisator at the W.A. Turf Club. Longson married the daughter of a builder who constructed many prominent Perth buildings. He died in 1913.346

**Thomas Harry Marshall (c1862-1909)** Born near York in about 1862, Marshall was a clerk and store assistant in Perth during the early 1880s. He then moved to Fremantle and became a baker. Marshall married the daughter of an Adelaide butcher in South Australia in 1886, returning to Western Australia soon afterwards. He played just one season of football for the Victorians, then switched across to the Fremantle club. He also played cricket for the Fremantle Cricket Club. In 1894, he moved to Cue and was the publican at a local hotel, but soon went bankrupt. At the

---


time of his death from gastroenteritis in 1909, Marshall was the publican at Day
Dawn, near Cue.  

Frederick McDonough (1867-1915) McDonough was born at Guildford, the son of a
pensioner guard. During the 1880s, he was a noted runner and played cricket for
the Union Cricket Club. He played football for the Victorians, the West Australians
and then the Metropolitans. He was also a member of the Metropolitan Rifle
Volunteers and eventually became a publican at Maylands. McDonough married the
daughter of a pensioner guard and was working as an upholsterer in Fremantle
shortly before his death in 1915.  

George Davidson Moffat (1865-1932) The son of a convict, George Moffat was not
even the most famous footballing person in his family. Brother Alf eventually
became president of the league’s successor, the W.A.F.L. Moffat was born at Perth
in 1865 and worked as a wheelwright during the 1880s. He was also a member of
the Union Cricket Club and played football with the Victorians, then the West
Australians, then the Metropolitans. Moffat never married, moving to North
Dandalup during the 1900s. He died of stomach cancer at Subiaco in 1932.  

Alexander George Rankin (1863-1927) Rankin was yet another South Australian,
and he played under the Victorian rules with the North Adelaide Football Club in

347 State Records Office of Western Australia, Consignment No. 3403, Files – Probate, 71 of 1910,
May 1888, p. 5; “Marriages”, The South Australian Register, 21 April 1886, p. 4; “The Late Mr E.M.C.
Ohlmeyer”, The Register, 10 November 1919, p. 9; “The Bankruptcy Court”, The Inquirer and
Commercial News, 28 June 1895, p. 13; “Sporting”, The West Australian, 29 December 1885, p. 3;
“News and Notes”, The West Australian, 27 May 1886, p. 3; Erickson, The Bicentennial Dictionary of
Western Australians, Vol 3, K-Q, p. 2086.  
348 “Perth v Union C.C.”, The West Australian, 21 January 1885, p. 3; “Metropolitan Rifle Volunteers”,
The Western Mail, 22 October 1887, p. 12; “Sporting”, The West Australian, 27 February 1888, p. 3;
1889, p. 4; “Licensing Courts,” The West Australian, 3 June 1903, p. 2; “Births, Marriages and
Deaths”, The Sunday Times, 12 December 1915, p. 1; Erickson, The Bicentennial Dictionary of
Western Australians, Vol. 3, K-Q, p. 1965; Erickson, The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western
349 State Records Office of Western Australia, Consignment No. 3403, Files – Probate, 420 of 1933,
George Davidson Moffat, Death Certificate; “Perth v Union C.C.”, The West Australian, 21 January
1885, p. 3; “West Australians v Rovers”, The West Australian, 3 June 1887, p. 3; “The Metropolitan
F.C.”, The Western Mail, 25 May 1889, p. 5; “Deaths”, The West Australian, 16 December 1932, p. 1;
1883. He arrived in 1884 on the same ship as team-mate Joseph Hardy. Rankin played for two seasons with the Victorians and continued playing under the Victorian rules after his return to South Australia. While in Perth, he also played cricket for the Union Cricket Club. A carpenter, he was born in Adelaide in 1863 and died there in 1927. He was the son of an Adelaide Councillor and married a woman from New South Wales.350

William Henry James Strickland (1862-1940) Strickland’s father was a publican and chairman of the W.A. Turf Club. Born at Perth in 1862, Strickland grew up around the hotels. He visited Melbourne early in 1883, but the visit took place outside of the football season. He is only reported to have played for the Victorians in 1885. Strickland eventually became a grazier and ended his days farming at North Dandalup. He died at Subiaco in 1940.351

Michael Joseph Walsh (1864-1919) The son of an enrolled pensioner who required poor relief to survive in Perth, Walsh was born at sea. He eventually secured work as a civil servant in the city and, later still, at the central post office. Walsh played football for the Victorians in 1885 and 1886. Marrying the daughter of a senior police officer, he died of tuberculosis in 1919.352


Richard Ward (1864-1926) The son of a greengrocer, Ward was born at Perth in 1864 and married his cousin in 1886. He lived his entire life in Perth, working as a carpenter early in his career. He played football through until 1890, finishing his career with the Metropolitan Football Club, and also played cricket for the Union Cricket Club. Ward later became superintendent of the Swanbourne Rifle Range and died during a medical operation in Perth in 1926.\textsuperscript{353}

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Private Archives

Fremantle Cricket Club Ledger. Held in the private collection of Robert Moore.

1884-85 Season.

Public Archives

State Records Office of Western Australia: Consignment No. 4661, Fremantle Boys School, Admission Registers, 1858-1875.

State Records Office of Western Australia, Consignment No. 3403, Files – Probate.

State Records Office of Western Australia, Consignment No. 3458, Applications for Grants of Letters of Administration.

Newspapers and Periodicals

*The Advertiser* (S.A.)

*The Adelaide Observer* (S.A.)

*The Argus* (Vic.)

*The Bendigo Advertiser* (Vic.)

*The Bunbury Herald* (W.A.)

*The Daily News* (W.A.)

*The Evening Journal* (S.A.)
The Evening Star (W.A.)

Grandstand News (W.A.)

The Herald (W.A.)

The Inquirer and Commercial News (W.A.)

The Kalgoorlie Miner (W.A.)

The Morning Herald (W.A.)

The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News (W.A.)

The Perth Gazette and West Australian Times (W.A.)

The Register (S.A.)

The South Australian Advertiser (S.A.)

The South Australian Chronicle and Weekly Mail (S.A.)

The South Australian Register (S.A.)

The Southern Times (W.A.)

The Sunday Times (W.A.)

The Sydney Morning Herald (N.S.W.)

The West Australian (W.A.)

The Western Australian Times (W.A.)

The Western Mail (W.A.)

W.A. Sportsman (W.A.)
West Australian Football Commission Annual Review, 2014

Books


**Journal Articles, Book Chapters and Encyclopaedia Entries**

Adair, Darryl, “Australian Sport History: From the Founding Years to Today”, in *Sport in History*, Volume 29, Number 3 (September 2009), pp. 405-436.


Hess, Rob, “‘Ladies are Specially Invited’: Women in the Culture of Australian Rules Football”, in International Journal of the History of Sport, Volume 17, Number 2 (2000), pp. 111-141.


Anthony Lunt, “Australian Rules”, in Gregory, Jenny and Gothard, Jan, eds., Historical Encyclopedia of Western Australia, Crawley: University of Western Australia Press (2009), pp. 112-114.

Theses


Personal Communications

Greg Wardell-Johnson to author, email, 29 July 2015.

Internet Databases

Department of Justice, Index of Births, Deaths and Marriages in Western Australia:
Searching WA Online Indexes, 

Ancestry.com Index of Births in Australia: Australia, Birth Index, 1788-1922, 

Ancestry.com Index of Births in England and Wales: Birth Index, 1837-1915, 
http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/db.aspx?dbid=8912

Ancestry.com Index of Deaths in Australia: Australia, Death Index, 1788-1922, 

Metropolitan Cemeteries Board (Perth), Burials Information: Names and Locations 


Websites

The Australian National University’s Australian Dictionary of Biography website: 
http://adb.anu.edu.au

Family Tree Information for Daniel Joseph Rodrigues: Daniel Joseph Rogers (Born Rodrigues) – Overview – Ancestry.co.uk, 
http://trees.ancestry.co.uk/tree/77501927/person/44365240849
Illustrations

Unknown Photographer, Fremantle Football Club, 1885, West Australian Newspapers Library.

Unknown Photographer, Perth Rovers Football Club, 1885, West Australian Newspapers Library.